Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 276 | THURSDAY OCTOBER 2, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Did you register to vote in the upcoming CNMI delegate election?

Let your voice be heard!
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to cast your vote.

2 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Acceptable
Hong Kong authorities said the amount of melamine found in samples of Cadbury chocolate was acceptable for human consumption.

ASIA...Page 15

European Tour
When I set out to visit the smallest countries in Europe, I put Luxembourg at the top of the list.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Health care in Pacific territories to improve under coordinated effort

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A new federal agency has been formed to assess the health care needs of the U.S. insular areas, including the CNMI.

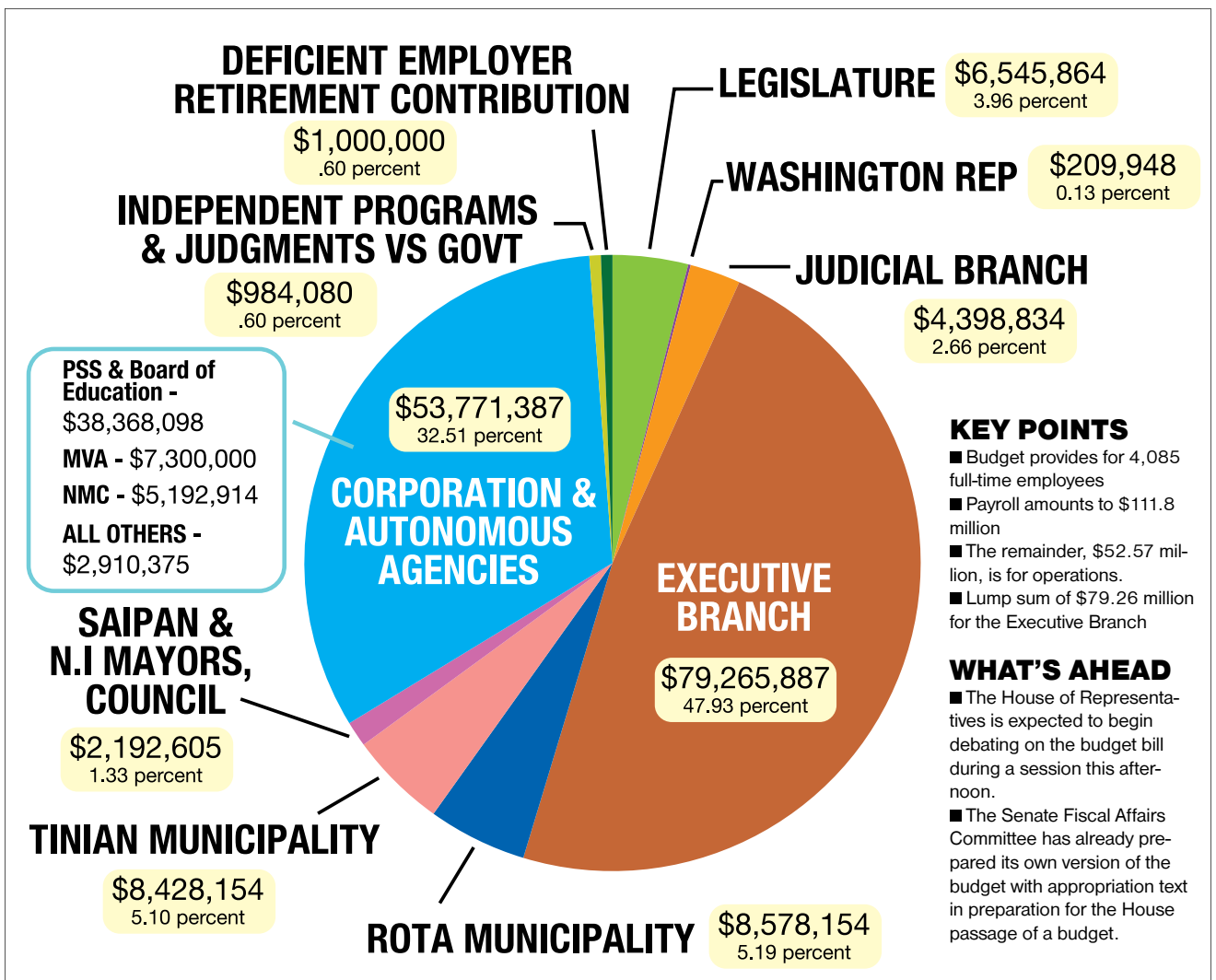
The Interagency Coordinated Assets for Insular Health Response will develop a priority list of actions, specific to each of the insular areas, that addresses the most critical health care needs.

Each insular area will prepare a report and submit it to the Interagency Group on Insular Areas by June 2009.

The insular areas taking part in the

See HEALTH on Page 4

CUC for sale for $250 million



Source: House Committee on Ways and Means

KEY POINTS
- Budget provides for 4,085 full-time employees
- Payroll amounts to $111.8 million
- The remainder, $52.57 million, is for operations.
- Lump sum of $79.26 million for the Executive Branch

WHAT'S AHEAD
- The House of Representatives is expected to begin debating on the budget bill during a session this afternoon.
- The Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee has already prepared its own version of the budget with appropriation text in preparation for the House passage of a budget.

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Legislature has enacted a measure requiring the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to sell its power system for $250 million.

See CUC on Page 4

House committee offers $165M budget

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The House Committee on Ways and Means has introduced a budget that appropriates $165.37 million in resources for fiscal year 2009, which began yesterday.

The proposed budget includes $156.7 million of projected government revenue, augmented with $5.17 million in Compact Impact funds and $3.5 million of "unencumbered" money taken from numerous accounts outside of the general fund.

A separate $3 million is proposed for the Department of Public Lands, whose revenue is constitutionally reserved for the agency's administrative costs and for investment by the Marianas Public

See HOUSE on Page 4

Expert says CUC should switch fuels

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

If the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. switched the type of fuel it burns to power the CNMI's power grid from diesel to heavy oil, it could save mil-

See EXPERT on Page 4

STEFAN SEBASTIAN
Simon Sanchez of the Guam Consolidated Commission on Utilities.

Four-day int'l tattoo festival is coming. **PAGE 5**
Feds to host marine monument forum. **PAGE 6**

Local

Bill that includes NMI in grant program heads to Bush

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

Legislation is on its way to President Bush's desk that will lead to the inclusion of the CNMI in a U.S. Department of Defense program that could give the local government and businesses a major economic jumpstart through federal grants ahead of the pending military buildup in Guam, Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio said Wednesday.

"I've wanted this for a while," Tenorio said during a stop on Saipan to campaign for his election as the CNMI's non-voting House delegate. "Now it's on the way to the president for his signature."

In an interview after a meeting of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Tenorio said the bill would bring the CNMI and the U.S. Virgin Islands into the scope of the work done by the Defense Department's Office of Economic Adjustment, which is tasked with assisting communities impacted by changes in the department's policies or practices. According to literature from the office, its work consists of providing technical assistance, grants and help with advanced planning.

Guam is already taking part in the office's programs, Tenorio said, and as the island gears up for the arrival of more than 8,000 Marines from Okinawa, Japan, in the near future, the federal grant money it is receiving could prove crucial to small businesses.

"This is good for us because it enables the local government and the private sector within the community to take advantage of grants being offered by various agencies that are tied to federal activities," said Tenorio. "It provides for participation of the local government and the business community so they can be eligible to take on grants that are military activities related."

The military buildup in Guam is expected to impact the nearby islands of Pagan and Tinian, which may become the site of training activities, armed forces officials previously said. Should the legislation gain Bush's approval, that could clear the way for local businesses to take advantage of the military's arrival.

"This is the first time we're getting into this," said Tenorio. "If there are projects on Tinian, for example, that are being put up by the military then the local government and local entrepreneurs will be able to work with the agencies from the federal government to get grants and technical assistance so they can prepare themselves to bid on certain projects."

BEH inspects 22 schools

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Inspectors from the Bureau of Environmental Heath conducted initial site inspections on 22 public schools after the agency earlier failed to distribute sanitation permits.

BEH inspectors have given the principals permit applications to complete and return with supporting documents and application fees, said Department of Public Health lawyer Alex Gorman.

"Once those are received, then the sanitary permits will be issued," Gorman said in an e-mail. "The process is proceeding normally at this time just as it would for any business required to have a sanitary permit."

BEH manager John Tagabuel said in September that the agency had failed to distribute the permits.

He said the agency did not follow up or enforce the law with school management, although schools are regularly inspected once or twice a year, Tagabuel said.

The issue came to light when Gov. Benigno Fitial asked DPH to create a task force that would check the preparedness of public schools during the island's extended power outages.

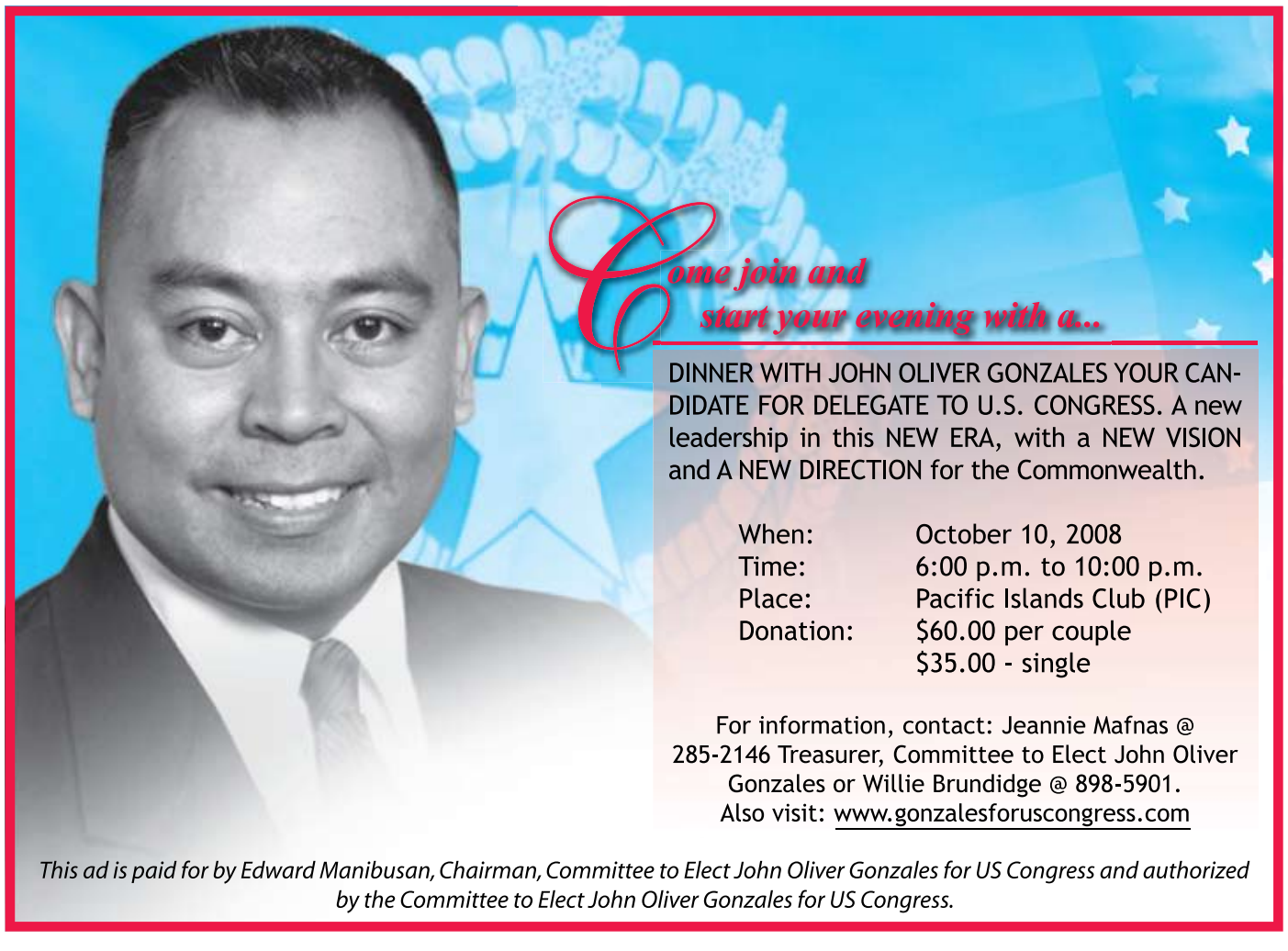
The night before the first day of classes, Fitial signed an executive order delaying the start in four schools—Marianas High School, Kagman Elementary, Oleai Head Start and Koblerville Elementary—after water quality test results were not processed in time for the first day.

Under normal circumstances, BEH can recommend to the Secretary of Public Health to close an establishment, but because there were no permits, the Department of Public Health recommended Fitial use his authority to delay the opening.

According to the Commonwealth Environmental Health and Sanitation Act of 2000, a health inspector must visit all schools—public or private, kindergarten through college—and declare the school sanitary before the school is allowed to purchase a permit. Permits are renewed annually.

During inspections, BEH will check for water supply adequacy in quantity and quality; sewage and waste disposal; cleanliness of the facility and premises; protection of equipment and other materials from dirt and contamination; maintenance of equipment; restroom facilities; control and exclusion of insects and rodents; and infectious disease control.

Establishments that do not comply receive a verbal warning or letter, a late penalty fee, and if corrections are not made, a recommendation to the Secretary of Public Health for closure.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Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Council on Developmental Disabilities
Developmental Disabilities Basic State Grant Program
Bldg. 1312 Capitol Hill _ P.O. BOX 502565, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-7000 _ Fax: (670) 664-7030

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the Council Members of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, through its Interim Chairman, is hereby giving a notice that a Special Meeting is to take place on Friday, October 3, 2008 at 9:00 AM in the conference room of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Welcoming Remarks
II. Roll Call
III. Establishment of Quorum
IV. Executive Session
V. Open Session
VI. Next Meeting
VII. Closure

In accordance to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 3 days in advance at 664-7000. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Derek Duenas, Interim Chairperson

CUC lowers its power rates for October

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has lowered the monthly power rates for the second straight month.

The fluctuating fuel rate for October is 33.7 cents per kilowatt-hour, down from 36.2 cents in September. The all-time high was set in August when customers were paying 41.3 cents per kWh. In May, CUC more than doubled the rates per kWh for residential customers.

Under the new October rates, residential customers using less than 500 kWh will be charged 33.7 cents in fluctuating electric fuel and 1.6 cents for electric non-fuel, for a total of 35.3 cents per kWh.

Customers using 501 to 1,000 kWh, will be charged 33.7 cents for fluctuating electric fuel and 6.6 cents for electric non-fuel, for a total of 40.3 cents per kWh.

Those using 1,001 to 2,000 kWh, will pay 33.7 cents for fluctuating electric fuel and 8.6 cents for electric non-fuel, for a total of 42.3 cents per kWh. Residential customers using more than 2,000 kWh, will pay 33.7 cents for fluctuating electric fuel and 12.7 cents for electric non-fuel, for a total of 46.4 cents per kWh. All residential customers must pay a $5.60 fixed customer charge.

Commercial customers will pay 33.7 cents for fluctuating electric fuel and 8.6 cents for electric non-fuel, for a total of 42.3 cents per kWh. Government agencies will pay 33.7 cents for fluctuating electric fuel and 9.1 cents for electric non-fuel, for a total of 42.8 cents per kWh. Commercial and government customers must also pay a monthly fixed customer charge of $7.67. ***(Kristi Eaton)***

Man'amko Advisory Council elects new officers

The new Man'amko Advisory Council officers are, from left, Francisco Reyes, chairman; Antonia Aguon, member; Terry Sorroza, secretary; Meryalen Conrad, member; Christiana Michael, member; Carmen Taitano, vice chairman; Ana Nakatsukasa, treasurer; and Mila Garin, member.
KRISTI EATON

New officers for the Man'amko Advisory Council were named Tuesday at the Office on Aging.

The new officers are Francisco Reyes, chairman; Carmen Taitano, vice chairman; Terry Sorroza, secretary; Ana Nakatsukasa, treasurer; and members Antonia Aguon, Meryalan Conrad, Christiana Michae, and Mila Garin.

Conrad said she plans to focus on fundraising for the *man'amko*.

"I want to help, to really help *man'amko*," she said. "Some are very quick to help. I might not really understand some things, but I just want to help."

Also, two *man'amko* celebrated the completion of a basic computer class.

Rosario Ibanez and Elena Villanueva completed the course that taught them basic skills.

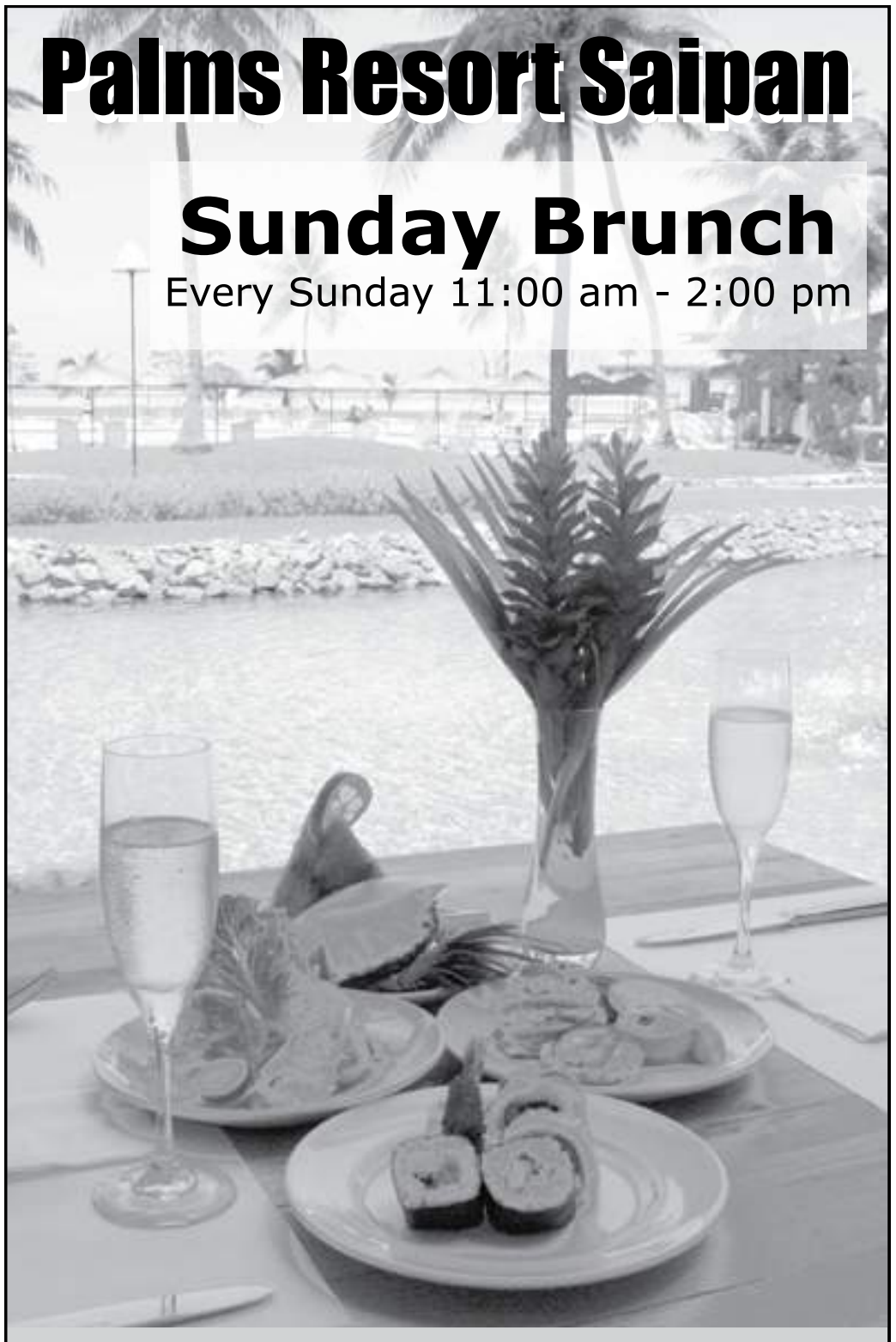
Garin, a 2007 graduate of the computer class, said the skills she learned in the class help her to record her past.

"It gives us a chance to record our lives and remember when we were young," she said. "It's time for us now to find ways and means to record our memories. The computer class is a way to refresh our memory."

Also, she added, using the computer has kept her busy.

"Now I don't have time to be lonely because there's the computer," she said. "Now I'm eager to come." ***(Kristi Eaton)***

Newborn Hearing Screening
Did you know that …
Every baby born in the CNMI receives a hearing screening before leaving the hospital?
Ask if your baby passed the test. Babies learn to talk from what they hear… if your baby needs follow up, schedule your appointment right way.
Follow-up testing is FREE!
Call 236-8709
Printing funded by the Cooperative Agreement for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Tracking, Surveillance, and Integration.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Man caught on camera stealing gets five days

A man who was caught on a surveillance camera stealing an air-conditioner unit's condenser from a poker arcade in Chalan Kanoa pleaded guilty yesterday.

Dennis J. Ngeskebei, 39, pleaded guilty to theft.

Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman sentenced Ngeskebei to one year in prison, all suspended except for five days.

Wiseman ordered the defendant to start serving the prison term at the Department of Corrections on Oct. 17, 2008, at 6pm.

According to the plea agreement, on March 9, 2007, the defendant stole an air-conditioning condenser belonging to Nova Fun & Games.

Police said the owner of Nova Fun reported to police on March 9, 2007, that two men stole their air-conditioner unit's condenser from outside the arcade.

The owner showed the police footage of their surveillance camera in which two men were shown stealing the air-conditioner's condenser.

The footage led to the arrest of Ngeskebei and Raymond I. Duenas.

Police said the two admitted stealing the item and selling it to Triple Star Recycling Center in As Perdido for $14. They then split the money. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Feds propose listing 48 Hawaiian species

HONOLULU (AP)—The federal government took a new, ecosystem-based approach to the endangered species list on Tuesday, proposing an all-at-once addition of 48 species, including plants, two birds and a fly, that live only on the Hawaiian island of Kauai.

The action by the Interior Department would designate about 43 square miles as critical habitat for all the species rather than considering each species' habitat separately, which has been the practice for three decades. Officials said considering the species all at once should save time and resources and would help the whole ecosystem.

The same approach is planned to help protect rare species on Oahu, the Big Island and Maui over the next several years, and it could be considered for the Arctic, big river systems of the Southwest and areas of the mountain West, according to department officials.

HOUSE

From Page 1

Land Trust, and cannot be used for central government operations.

Excluding DPL, the proposed budget provides for 4,085 full-time employees. The personnel cap represents a payroll of $111.8 million, a little over two-thirds of the total budget. The remainder, $52.57 million, will go to operations.

As expected, the proposed budget provides a lump-sum appropriation of $79.26 million for the Executive Branch. Except for the $3.63 million for the CNMI Scholarship Office, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial will have full authority to distribute these funds to the departments and agencies under the Executive Branch.

The bill sets the employer pension contribution rate at 11 percent of the payroll, much lower than the 37.4 percent recommended by the NMI Retirement Fund's actuarial consultant. It also earmarks $1 million to the Retirement Fund to pay for the previous year's deficient employer contributions for eligible employees who have been unable to retire because of the freeze on all new retirements.

The proposed legislation appropriates $100,000 for judgments ordered by the courts against the CNMI government. The Secretary of Finance, in consultation with the Attorney General, will decide as to how payments will be made.

Under the budget bill, CNMI government agencies will be prohibited from using their appropriations to sue another local agency. However, it does not contain any provision stopping the governor from using any part of the $75.63 million at his disposal for his immigration lawsuit against the U.S. government.

In anticipation of the pending federal takeover of local immigration, the appropriation bill calls for the lateral transfer of current employees at the Division of Immigration to other government offices.

Further, the budget bill revives a vetoed bill lifting the salary caps for medical professionals, as well as unspecified professionals working at the Legislature and the Judiciary. The provision addresses, among other things, the government's inability to attract pharmacists to work at the Commonwealth Health Center, the main reason for the governor's recent emergency declaration for the hospital's in-house pharmacy.

The House of Representatives is expected to begin debating on the budget bill during a session this afternoon.

EXPERT

From Page 1

lions of dollars each year, including enough to pay for a new heavy oil-powered generator, Simon Sanchez of the Guam Consolidated Commission on Utilities said Wednesday in a speech before members of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

"If Saipan made a concerted effort to convert to heavy oil, the fuel savings based on last year's fuel consumption would be 50 million dollars," Sanchez said before a crowd at the Pacific Islands Club, noting that the savings would later add up enough to pay for the new generator.

"It would cost 80 million dollars to build a slow speed heavy oil generator and we've figured out that with debt service and operational costs…with the savings on fuel by going to heavy oil from diesel, you could pay for the generator and still save 30 million dollars a year on fuel, so we urge CUC to look at that conversion as fast as they can. Get out of diesel. Get into heavy oil."

Sanchez's analysis prompted a stir in the crowd made up of business leaders who have struggled through a recent increase in CUC's electricity rates, due in part to skyrocketing fuel costs. One added benefit to the switch, he noted, is that the CNMI and Guam could also save money by purchasing heavy oil together.

Sanchez also had a host of key recommendations for how CUC can improve its services by mirroring Guam's electric power system. His talk comes after CUC executive director Anthony Muña in a press conference last week said the utility service is eyeing a "Guam model" as part of its efforts to address the CNMI's power crisis.

"You are where we were 10 years ago," Sanchez said.

A critical aspect of Guam's power system, he noted, is the involvement of private sector partners on everything from managing staff to fuel storage. In an ideal situation, he said, government involvement is often limited to overseeing the work of private businesses.

"It's easier to fire a bad contractor than it is to fire a bad government," he said. "If they aren't producing, you know, you can go find another girlfriend that will give you what you need."

In an interview after the speech, the CNMI's Resident Representative, Pete A. Tenorio, said that added private sector involvement is vital to reforming CUC and that many of Sanchez's ideas are worthy of consideration. However, the people of the CNMI must first agree to make power generation a top issue before leaders can address the problem, he added.

"The bottom line for us is to be able to agree on whether or not we think that the power generation problem is the priority," said Tenorio. "We have not agreed to that yet. From what I gather, people have all kinds of ideas about what kind of power system we should have and I feel that once that agreement is made, then we go into the next step, which is to determine how best to address that particular problem."

However, the private sector, he said, could play an important role.

"We need expertise to advise us, not only in terms of managing the utilities themselves but even in terms of having people from the outside do the performance management and also the operations of the power plant," said Tenorio. "And that's why Guam is successful, because there's quite a bit of private sector involvement that's out there to perform good service as well as make a profit out of the operation. I think that's something we should look at very carefully."

CUC

From Page 1

The House of Representatives voted 15-3 yesterday to override the governor's veto of the CUC privatization bill, meeting the two-thirds threshold needed to enact the legislation over the governor's objections. The Senate had voted to override the veto last week.

The legislation requires CUC to privatize its power system through a bidding process, as opposed to a "request for proposals." It provides a $250 million price tag that prospective private sector buyers must pay in order to acquire CUC. Further, it gives CUC the power to settle disputes with the Commonwealth Development Authority by issuing $45 million in preferred stock.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial vetoed the bill, saying it could lead to higher utility rates. Any company that ends up buying CUC, he said, would try to recover the $250 million and other purchase costs by passing them on to utility consumers.

Proponents of the measure maintain that the legislation is urgently needed to avert an emergency declaration by the governor that would result in another sole source privatization contract. They note that, whenever the governor declares a state of emergency, the Legislature has been unable to do anything about it.

The proponents, particularly Reps. Heinz Hofschneider and Victor Hocog, also tout the bill's prohibition against "requests for proposals" in the procurement process as a strength. They note that a bidding process will prevent protests that hampered previous privatization efforts.

Yet the proponents also acknowledge there are problems with the bill, but they contend the Legislature "can always come back and amend it."

Rep. Tina Sablan, one of the three members who voted to uphold the veto, argues that, if the concern is that Fitial does not do "a sole-source firesale privatization of CUC," the Legislature can pass a law that prohibits that. She insists that the Legislature not pass the privatization bill until the flaws have been addressed.

"That mentality—that we can always come back and amend a law—is part of the problem. It undermines the already-deteriorated credibility of this government," she says.

Press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said the override "represents a major blow to our efforts on behalf of CUC, for the reasons mentioned in the Governor's veto message."

Simon Sanchez of the Guam Consolidated Commission on Utilities said the agency did not expect the CNMI Legislature to proceed with the override. "We encouraged them not to tie in that kind of number," he said, referring to the price for CUC, adding a company would be "forced to get that money back through rates."

For his part, Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Jim Arenovski said, "I guess we'll have to take a look at that bill and see how we can make some lemonade." The Chamber of Commerce, also pointing to sections of the bill that threaten to force major utility rate increases, had urged lawmakers against overriding the veto.

In addition to Sablan, the House members who voted against the override are Representatives Edward Salas and Francisco Dela Cruz. House Minority Leader Oscar M. Babauta abstained, and Rep. Ray N Yumul was absent.

HEALTH

From Page 1

agency are the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands.

Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne announced yesterday the formation of the agency at the Insular Areas Health Summit taking place in Honolulu, Hawaii.

"I want to assure you that the federal government recognizes its role and responsibilities in helping you improve the state of health care facilities and the delivery of health services in the insular areas," Kempthorne said in his opening remarks at the two-day summit. "That is why we—your federal partners—are here today to listen and learn and explore strategies for helping you to advance your health care sector."

The task force will be established within the Interagency Group on Insular Areas, established by President Bush on May 8, 2003. Members will include representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services, Defense, Veterans Affairs and the Interior.

Kempthorne, Veterans Affairs Secretary James B. Peake and two ranking officials from the Defense and Health and Human Services departments said their pact will raise the level of care in the territories.

The pact follows the release this month of an Interior Department inspector general report that spotlighted dilapidated facilities, overworked personnel and an inadequate supply of medicines and specialized care in the territories.

Gov. Felix Camacho of Guam offered telling examples of the state of health care in U.S. territories, which also include the U.S. Virgin Islands in the Caribbean. He said his constituents are suffering from abnormally high rates of diabetes, liver disease and cancer, but Guam has too few hospital beds, offers no radiation treatments for cancer patients and no kidney transplant services.

Moreover, he said many residents seek care in the Philippines and often cannot obtain the prescription medicines they need.

In an interview, Camacho said he is concerned that the next administration will de-emphasize the agreement. But Kempthorne and Peake said it will outlive the changeover because career civil servants who strongly support the initiative are overseeing it.

Kempthorne added that the combined heft of the four agencies will help efforts to gain approval in Congress and with White House budget officials.

Kempthorne also announced several funding initiatives, including $834,000 to strengthen the Guam Memorial Hospital's exterior walls and expand its medical supply warehouse, and $100,000 to the American Pacific Nursing Leaders Council to establish an administrative office at the University of Guam. It was also announced that $4.5 million has been awarded for the construction of a clinic on Guam to serve the health needs of veterans there and in other insular areas.

The Federated States of Micronesia will received $21.5 million in fiscal year 2009 Compact of Free Association funds, which will help pay for the day-to-day costs of hospital operations, salaries of medical professionals, replacing medical equipment and operating clinics on the islands of Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and Yap. Palau also received compact funding.

Department of Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez is representing the CNMI at the summit. Other island leaders include Gov. Togiola Tulafono of American Samoa; Gov. Felix Camacho of Guam; U.S. Virgin Islands Health Commissioner Vivian Ebbesen Fludd; President Manny Mori of the Federated States of Micronesia; President Litokwa Tomeing of the Marshall Islands; Vice President Elias Chin of Palau; Hawaii's Lt. Gov. James Aiona; U.S. Virgin Islands Delegate Donna M. Christensen, M.D.; and American Samoa Delegate Eni F.H. Faleomavaega. ***(With AP)***

LAPD detectives may pick up Miura next week

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Detectives from Los Angeles Police Department won't be here on Saipan until sometime next week to pick up Kazuyoshi Miura and escort him to California, according to Assistant Attorney General Jeffery Warfield Sr. yesterday.

Warfield told *Saipan Tribune* that after he left the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Monday he called the L.A. District Attorney's Office and left some messages.

He said he heard from LADA Monday night and spoke with one of the LAPD detectives Tuesday morning Saipan time.

"They won't be here this week. They are involved in a…cold case murder trial from 1988 which they are trying this week. So they won't be here until sometime next week at the earliest," the prosecutor said.

Warfield said he read an article from the *Los Angeles Times* Tuesday night saying that one detective has already been sent to Saipan.

"The word that was given to me was that they won't be out here until next week. So there might be somebody en route but nobody told me that somebody is on his way. I was a little bit surprised when I read that," he said.

Warfield said the 61-year-old Miura will be detained at the Department of Correction until LAPD detectives come and pick him up.

He said he expects LAPD detective Rick Jackson to come back but that's not guaranteed.

Warfield explained that the LAPD's trip need not be coordinated with him or with the Attorney General's Office.

"The only thing that has to happen is somebody from LA comes in, shows us that they're from the Los Angeles Police Department, they go to DOC, the DOC is satisfied with their credentials, DOC releases [Miura]," he said.

Warfield believes that LAPD will let them know they are coming out of courtesy, but they are not required to do so.

The prosecutor is aware that many Japanese journalists have been camping out at the Saipan airport since Monday, waiting for the arrival of the LAPD detectives.

"Go to the hotels… there's no point of staying there," Warfield advised the journalists.

He said if there are any new updates, he would notify press secretary Charles Reyes Jr. to draft a press release or call for a press conference. "Like if we find out they will be here Friday. Then we will hold a press conference and say it's going to be on Friday."

During Monday's hearing in federal court, Miura, through lawyer Bruce Berline, withdrew his petition for a writ of habeas corpus. The motion was granted.

Miura is facing charges in California over the killing of his wife in 1981. A California court dismissed the murder charge, but allowed the prosecution to proceed with the conspiracy to commit murder charge.

Four-day int'l tattoo festival is coming

If you think you've seen enough last year, think again because the most awaited event in all Marianas is back with more excitement, ink and spunk!

Be part of Saipan Tatu Fest 2008 once again, from Oct. 23 to 26, 2008, at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

Dragon Edong, the man behind this annual festivity, said they decided to hold the festival for four days this time due to insistent public demand.

"Last year's event was only two days and a lot of people were not able to come because of conflict of work schedules on weekends. This time will be more exciting because more international tattoo artists will be coming," said Edong.

Among those who have already confirmed their participation are tattoo artists from Japan, United States, the Philippines, Thailand, France, England, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Guam, and Norway.

The tattoo contest categories during the four-day event are tattoo of the day, best portrait, most realistic, best color, best tribal, best black and gray, best Japanese tattoo, best bodysuit, best dragon, sexiest tattoo, best arm tattoo, and best leg tattoo.

Aside from the competitions, there will also be live entertainment to spice up the already fun-filled occasion. Foods and drinks will be made available to the public. There will be a $10-ticket each day, which includes one free drink.

Just recently Dragon Edong, with his wife Fe as his model, won first place in the main event competition during the 2nd World Tattoo Festival in Pattaya, Thailand, in May 2008. It was the second time Edong won the award at the prestigious international competition.

People are invited to witness this one-of-a-kind event in the CNMI, Edong said, describing it as a local event with an international flavor, featuring a world-class gathering of great artists and talents that everyone should not miss.

"This is where the excitement is, where you will witness how to do body art in safe way. This will somehow educate people that getting a tattoo is safe and it is very much accepted in the community," he said.

The event is sponsored by iConnect, Budweiser, Marianas Visitors Authority, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Aquarius Beach Tower, Salbahe Brand, National Office Supply, Gold's Gym, Island Apparel, Pro-Tech, Islander Rent-A-Car, Godfather's Bar and El Drako Kooleksions.

For ticket inquiries and more information about the event, call 233-8288. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Dragon Edong, the man behind the Saipan Tatu Fest 2008.

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Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana
Ofisinan I Gubietno
Dipåttamenton I Tano' Pupbliku

NOTISIA POT MAPROPOPONE NA ATKILONTANO PUBLIKO

Segun gi lai 15-2, I Depattamenton Tano ha anununsia planon atkilon tano publiko giya Saipan, Commonwealth i Sankattan siha na Islas. Todo man-interesao libre munahalom opinion `sino infotmasion pot imapropopone na plano nuson tano publiko. Maprebeniye lokue isigiente siha na infotmasion para benefision publiko tat komo:

i. I tineteka na tano publiko madeskribe komo 003 A 11 (49,450 metro kuatdrao), 003 A 20 (49,503 metro kuatdrao), yan 003 A 19 (10,000 metro kuatdrao) maso sino menos nigaige giya Magpi, Saipan. Kopian lugat este siha nasitiu gaige gi Depattamenton Tano ni libre maina nu I publiku.

ii. I para u inatkilai Flame Sako Resort yan Spa un kotporasion guine giya Marianas. I membron direktot siha isigiente: Kang Dae Sik, Joon Sung Jung yan Woon Hwa Chung.

I Presidenten I kompania si Kang Dae Sik; Chun Sik Min, Segundo Presidente.

iii. I para u atkila ilugat para u usa gimahatsan fasilidat hotel yan otro siha na fasilidat.

I tetminonestena kontrata para 25 años ya siña ma-ekstende talo 15 años.

I mapropopone na atkilon manegosio as Señot Young Woo Lee.

iv. Libre hao mamaisen kopianestena plano gi Depattamenton Tano ni gaige gi segundo bibienda gi Joeten Dandan, Saipan; offisinanTano Publiko giya Luta yan Tinian.

v. I Depattamenton Tano ta ya otro plano ha resibe gi uson este siha na propiadat publiko giya Magpi, Saipan.

vi. I Sekretarion Depattamenton Tano Publiko siña ha resibe todo ninahalom opinion yan materiat pot este na proposito uttimo gi Oktubre 3, 2008 todo Offisinan Tano Publiku giya Saipan, Tinian yan Luta.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil 106 (b) mellól Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka eyoor máfiyeer rebwe isisilong ischil mángámangiir, aweewe, aingiingil reel pomwol akkilonul ammwelil falúweer toulap. Me bwal Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, e ayoora, lamal aweewe kka rebwe mweiti ngali milikka ebwe akkatééló.

i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap ekke bwáári Lot No. 003 A 11, eyoor faigh me tiwow sangaras fabwughuw limeigh me tiwow llapal (49,459 square meters), elap me ngáre eghús, Lot No. 003 A 19, faigh me tiwoow sangaras, lima bwughuw elluw (49,503) sq. meters llapal, elap me ngare eghuus, me Lot No. 003 A 20,, seigh sangaras (10,000) sq. meters, llapal, elap me eghus, elo Máschepi, Seipél. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor llól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngare óubwe ghuley fischiy.

ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Flame Sako Corporation. Schóól Assamwoolul mwiisch (board of directors) mellol corporation nge Dae Sik Kang me Chun Sik Min.

Samwoolul (President) corporation nge Dae Sik Kange. Vice President nge Chun Sik Min.

iii. Schóól akkilon ebwe yáayá bwuley ngali schagh akkayul hotel me akkaw iimw kka a fillong.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon ebwe ruweigh me limwoow ráágh (25 years), emmwel rebwe sóbweey ngáli bwal seigh me limwoow ráágh (15 years).

Pomwol akkilon ebwe mwir sángi llapal méél falúw (value of the property).

Schóól aweweel akkilon nge Young Woo Lee.

iv. Emmwel óubwe bwughil tilighial akkilon mellól bwulasiyool ammwelil falúweer toulap, elo aruwowal pwó(2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Dandan, Seipél; aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) mellól Bank of Saipan Commercial Buiding, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.

v. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo akkááw pomwol akkilon yeel me Máschepi, Seipél.

vi. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ebwe bwughil aweewe kkaal, aingiingil, mereer amweyút aramas mmwal schagh Ottuubre (October) 3, 2008 mellól Depattamentool Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta me Tchúlúyól..

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot Nos. 003 A 11, 003 A 19, 003 A 20 containing areas of approximately 49,500 square meters, 10,000 square meters, and 49,503 square meters (respectively), more or less, situated in Marpi, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is Flame Sako Corporation, a CNMI corporation. The Board of Directors of the corporation are Dae Sik Kang, Joon Sung Jung, and Woon Hwa Chung.

The President corporation is Dae Sik Kang. The Vice President is Chun Sik Min.

iii. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of developing and operating a resort hotel and spa and related facilities.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.

The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Young Woo Lee.

iv. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; the 2nd floor of the Bank of Saipan Commercial Building, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

v. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Marpi, Saipan.

vi. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before October 3 , 2008 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

Feds to host monument forum

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

Federal authorities will host a public forum later this month on a White House proposal to establish a national marine monument in the CNMI's northern waters, an event that is sure to see a supporters and opponents of the plan clash.

In a joint statement issued Wednesday, the White House and federal environmental regulators announced a forum will take place at the Fiesta Resort on Saipan Oct. 20, beginning at 5:30pm. The forum is the last of four federal officials will host, including one in Washington, DC, one in Hawaii and one in American Samoa.

The monument proposal would place heightened federal protections upon 115,000 square miles of ocean water encompassing the islands of Maug, Asuncion and Uracus, a region environmentalists have dubbed a "biodiversity hotspot" that is under increasing threat from human activity. Opponents of the plan, meanwhile, have said the proposal would constitute an intrusion on the CNMI's autonomy.

In the statement, the federal agencies said the forum are not formal public comment sessions, but rather will use a "roundtable format" to engage people in a conversation about the scientific, historical and cultural issues involved in the proposal. The information gathered will become part of the government's records as officials conduct an assessment of the northern waters to determine whether they are suited as to be a national monument.

"The areas under consideration are home to objects of historic and scientific interest that may be appropriate for protection and improved conservation and management under available authorities," the statement says, adding later that President Bush "has a longstanding commitment to ocean conservation and preserving our oceans for future generations."

The CNMI's waters are competing with sites in American Samoa and the Rose Atoll for designation as a monument.

In addition to the forum, comments can be submitted via email to oceans@ceq.eop.gov, via mail to Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, 722 Jackson Place, NW, Washington, D.C. 20503. Comments can also be dropped off at the visitor center of the American Memorial Park, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, between 10am and 5pm Wednesdays through Sundays. To be considered in the final assessment comments must be received no later than Oct. 26, 2008.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER
September 2008 Tests Showed Coliform Bacteria in Saipan Water

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we did to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for drinking water contaminants. Throughout **September 2008**, we collected **126** water samples in Saipan to test for the presence of coliform bacteria with **seventeen** samples or **13.49%** showing the presence of total coliform bacteria. The standard is that no more than five percent (5%) of samples may do so.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. *Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other; potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.*

Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the system's treatment or distribution system (pipelines). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as fecal coliform or *E. coli*, are present. We did find these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.

What happened? What was done? Look below for the specific village or streets where problems occurred in **September 2008**:

- **Koblerville:** (sample ID# 28A, As Gonno Rd., Ahu Dr., Alaguan St.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, samples were collected during or within an hour of a power outage, therefore, the chlorine treatment did not have enough mixing or contact time within the distribution system. Treatment operators flushed the lines and chlorine treatment increased for the disinfections process. Repeat samples collected on Friday, September 5th were tested and found to be free of both total coliform and E. coli.
- **Lower Gualo Rai:** (sample ID# 31A, Earhart Dr., Isley Pl., Rai Dr. Espana St.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, samples were collected during or within an hour of a power outage, the chlorine treatment did not have enough mixing or contact time within the distribution system. Chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process.
- **Dandan:** (sample ID# 21C, Chalan Msgr. Martinez Rd.) Treatment operator discovered the chlorine supply hose was disconnected. This caused disruption to the treatment process. Treatment operator connected the hose and flushed the lines. Chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process.
- **Kannat Tabla Reservoir-Chalan Laulau, San Jose:** (sample ID# 16A, 16B, Gunot Way, Wischira Ave.) Tests indicated that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, sample sites are in non 24-hour water service areas. Therefore, the chlorine treatment did not have enough mixing or contact time within the distribution system. Water watch flushed the lines and chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process.
- **Kagman:** (sample ID# 10A, 10B, 43A, 43C, Kagman Rd., Achoti Ave.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, samples were collected during or within an hour of a power outage, the chlorine treatment did not have enough mixing or contact time within the distribution system. Chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process.
- **San Vicente:** (sample ID# 12A, 12C, Palu Ln., Kahida Pl, Kalahi Ln., Nativo Dr., Abaniku Ln., Kommat Wy., Lamasa Pl.) Tests indicated that there were inadequate chlorine levels in a routine sample and the chlorine dosage at the well was "0". The chlorine booster pump at SV-1 chlorine station malfunctioned which caused the dosage to drop to "0" lbs. per day. This was not discovered until 10:20 a.m. on September 18, 2008. In the afternoon of September 18th , the pump & motor crew replaced the motor of the chlorine booster pump and reactivated the well. Treatment operators flushed the lines and chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process. Repeat samples collected on around 3:00 p.m. on September 18th were tested and found to be free of both total coliform and E. coli.

For more information, please contact CUC Water Quality Laboratory Manager, Heidi Yelin at 322-5140 or via email at: cuclabman@yahoo.com or contact CUC Water Division Manager, Mariano Iglecias at 235-7025 or via email at:miglecias@cucqov.net

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Water Division
State Water System ID #: MP 0000001 Date Distributed: October 2, 2008

'Judgment enforceable sans legislative funding'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has ruled it can enforce its judgments against CNMI government agencies even if the Legislature has not appropriated money to satisfy such judgments.

"The failure of the Legislature to fulfill its constitutional mandate does not, cannot, and will not prevent the court from taking all necessary steps to ensure that its judgments are enforceable," according to U.S. District Court for the MMI chief judge Alex R. Munson in his order issued Tuesday.

"A court that cannot enforce its judgments must forever close its doors, as it will have become nothing more than an historical curiosity," said Munson in granting Antonio S. Camacho's motion for writ of execution.

The judge stayed Camacho from attempting to enforce the $239,397 judgment he had obtained against the Department of Public Lands as the successor of the defunct Marianas Public Lands Authority until Oct. 24, 2008, to allow the parties to reach a mutually agreeable method to pay the judgment.

"If no agreement can be reached within that time, [Camacho] may pursue the remedies sought in his motion, including a writ of execution," the judge said.

In December 2006, a federal jury found DPL, as the successor to the defunct MPLA, liable to pay $239,397 to Camacho over the taking of his land in Gualo Rai.

The jurors reached a verdict finding that all the property of Camacho was taken in the early 1990s.

The jurors determined that Camacho's property was taken on Feb. 28, 1992, and that the fair market value of his land during the time of taking was $95 per square meter.

The jurors found that an annual 6 percent interest rate should be applied to compensate Camacho.

Attorney Michael Dotts served as Camacho's lawyer.

DPL appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. DPL's appeal was dismissed in August 2007 for failure to file an opening brief. The case lay dormant until Camacho filed the instant motion for writ of execution.

DPL urged the federal court to defer to Commonwealth law and agree with them that Camacho has no means to enforce the judgment without an appropriation by the Legislature.

DPL cited the Commonwealth Code, which directs that payment of judgments rendered against the Commonwealth government are to be paid by legislative appropriation.

In his decision, Munson said if the court were required to balance the interests of its ability to enforce validly-rendered judgments versus the right of the Legislature to fulfill its statutory duties, the court finds "that the balance tilts overwhelmingly in favor of protecting the independence of the federal judiciary and of providing federal litigants in the Commonwealth a meaningful, timely avenue to collect judgments."

Two men in 'ice' case plead guilty

Two men facing separate "ice" cases entered a guilty plea in the Superior and District Courts yesterday.

Greg Twelbang Magofna pleaded guilty to illegal possession of a controlled substance in the Superior Court, while Manuel Aldan Sablan pleaded guilty to distribution and possession, with intent to distribute a controlled substance in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona sentenced Magofna to 55 days in prison, with credit for the 55 days he has already spent in prison.

Following a plea agreement, Manglona placed Magofna on three years of supervised release and required him to pay a $1,000 fine, $100 court assessment fee, and $100 annual probation fee.

The judge ordered Magofna to perform, among other things, 100 hours of community service and attend a substance abuse counseling.

According to the plea agreement, on Oct. 30, 2007, Magofna unlawfully possessed less than a gram of "ice."

In Sablan's case, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex Munson set the sentencing for Jan. 6, 2009, at 9am.

The plea agreement stated that on Dec. 1, 2007, Sablan knowingly aided the distribution of "ice." The total quantity of "ice" involved was less than 250 net milligrams.

Sablan, Lawrence Kalen, and Greggory Kalen were indicted with one count of conspiracy to distribute "ice", and two counts of distribution and possession with intent to distribute "ice."

According to the indictment, the three conspired to distribute "ice" on Dec. 1 to 13, 2007.

On Dec. 1, the defendants allegedly distributed 0.17 grams of "ice" and on Dec. 13 distributed 0.10 grams of "ice."

Greggory and Lawrence Kalen had already pleaded guilty to distribution and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance. Both are awaiting sentencing. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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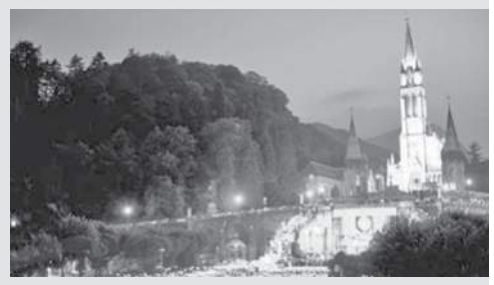

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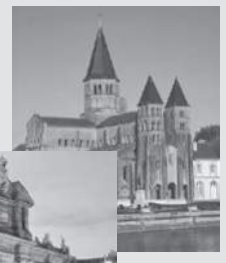

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Judge remands court action to Labor

The Superior Court stayed Tuesday a court action filed by an alien worker who was denied by Labor to transfer to a new employer after she was found making false testimony and submitting fraudulent documents.

Wiseman

Cody

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman remanded to Labor's Administrative Office the petition for judicial review filed by Zheng Qin Lu for a new hearing.

Wiseman made the decision after Lu's lawyer, Joe Hill, and Labor counsel Eleonor Nisperos filed a stipulation to remand the matter to Labor's hearing office.

The parties entered the stipulation in their desire to avoid further litigation and to resolve the case early.

Wiseman said if the hearing officer's decision or order is adverse to Lu, the worker will follow Labor's procedures for appeal.

Labor Administrative Hearing Officer Jerry Cody sanctioned Ruid Jin Trading Corp. in May for failing to correct deficiencies and employing three alien workers, including Lu, for months without Labor's authorization.

Cody ordered Rui Jin Trading Corp. to pay a $300 fine and barred the company from hiring new foreign workers for a period of two years.

Cody granted the requests of two workers—Qiying Jiang and Juan Zhao—to transfer to new employers.

Cody, however, denied Lu's transfer relief after determining she made a false testimony and submitted fraudulent documents.

Lu appealed and subsequently filed the court action against Labor officials. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

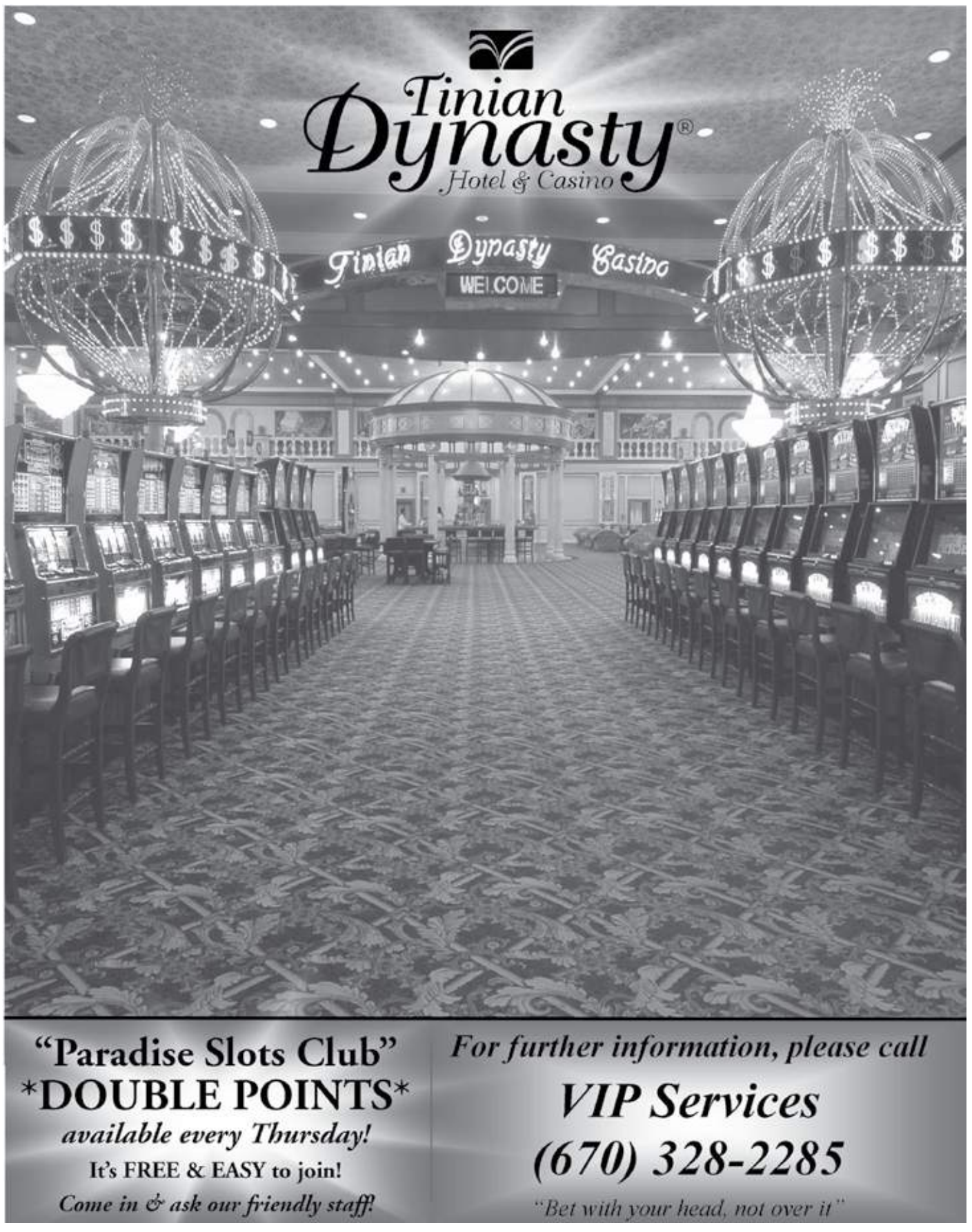
Shoden Sha magazine features Saipan

Shoden Sha magazine was on Saipan in September for an article titled "Best Destination for Mothers and Kids is Mariana Islands." They held shoots at Saipan tourist attractions, beaches and Managaha Island.

Tenorio

Shoden Sha magazine is a monthly publication with a circulation of 300,000 copies. The six-page feature on Saipan has an estimated in-kind value of $1,635,727. You may learn more about the magazine at http://www.sho-magjp/ninas/.

"We look forward to seeing the island of Saipan on Shoden Sha Magazine," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "Continued in kind exposure in Japan is crucial as we showcase our destination in our number one source market." ***(MVA)***



Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

October 02, 2000

Tinian Shipping losing over $4 million per year

The decision by the Commonwealth Ports Authority to collect a flat monthly rate of $20,000 for ferry operations between Saipan and Tinian came as a welcome news to financially-distressed Tinian Shipping & Transportation Inc. which has reported to have been incurring losses of over $4 million a year. General manager Peter Cheung said TSTI is suffering a huge financial loss of approximately $4.4 million per year in order to continue with its commitment to ferry passengers between Saipan and Tinian.

Pepero-Kiyu team vows to block takeover

Hundreds of supporters of the Pepero-Kiyu team attended its dinner fundraiser held last Friday at the Diamond Hotel in which the two made a pitch on their plans, including efforts to block federal takeover attempts as well as to improve education on the islands. Lt. Gov. Jesus "Pepero" R. Sablan, who is seeking Republican nomination for governor in next month's primary, and running-mate Senate Vice President Thomas "Kiyu" P. Villagomez took the stage as supporters cheered them on.

'Misunderstanding' triggers confusion on weapons bill

The proponent of the bill amending the gun control law to allow so-called "shooting resorts" in the CNMI has blamed "misunderstanding" as the reason for the mounting opposition drawn by the proposal. House Floor Leader Oscar M. Babauta, however, expressed optimism over favorable action by the Senate on the legislation, welcoming the decision by its leadership to travel to South Korea for research and inputs.

October 02, 2001

LMA boys break the stereotype

The stereotype of being Linala Malawasch Academy students have virtually followed them wherever they go. Stereotypically tagged as "troublemakers," school fights have usually been blamed on this zealous bunch of LMA boys. But when several reported gang-related fights broke out at the Hopwood Junior High School two weeks ago, guess what some of these teenagers did?

Oil firms allay fears of increase in prices

Major oil suppliers assured that a possibility of an oil price hike remains farfetched, as there are enough supply of petroleum products on the islands. Shell Operations and Marketing Director Jeff Boyer disclosed that petroleum products and reserves were shipped in last week. He said the latest shipment arrived without delay and it will be sufficient for the next two months. "There is no need for alarm and there will be no price influence."

PSS expects hikes in FY02 fed grants

The Public School System is setting up new accounts for another cycle of Fiscal Year 2002 federal grants, as it anticipates slight funding increases in food services and child care grants. The PSS recently received new money for its regular grants to include funding support for Special Education, the Advance Placement Program, the Headstart Program, Robert C. Byrd scholarships, The Vocational Education Program, the Bilingual Program, Food Services and Child Care Services.

October 02, 2002

EMO heads north to help Northern Islanders

Carrying boxes of assorted goods, a six-man team from the Emergency Management Office yesterday sailed to the Northern Islands to augment food supplies for residents of Agrigan and Alamagan Islands that were recently hit by Typhoon Higos. The team boarded the Kaiyu III vessel at the Smiling Cove Marina yesterday afternoon. EMO director Rudolfo Pua dispatched the team, after the agency pooled relief goods for the affected residents. The goods came from the American Red Cross and the Northern Islands Mayor's Office based on Saipan.

West Coast strike to impact garment firms

With majority of imports entering the CNMI coming from Asia, the ongoing labor dispute between shipping lines and longshoremen at 29 major Pacific ports in the West Coast would probably have a minimal impact in terms of the availability of goods in market shelves. However, each day of delay in the resolution of the strike would most likely have a heavy impact on the Commonwealth's lone export industry-the garment manufacturing sector-which relies heavily on sea transport in delivering their finished products to their buyers in the U.S. mainland.

Joeten's Best Buys of the Week!

October 2, thru October 8, 2008

Department Store
Quality Products

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$11.99

3 Way Training Set
$12.99

Vinyl Dumbell Set
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$16.99/ea.

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sku # 3225570, 5703
15 watts Warm Light or Day Light - $3.99

sku # 3225711, 5752
20 watts Warm Light or Day Light - $4.49

sku # 3225778
23 watts Warm Light - $4.49

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Gualo Rai Commercial Center
Middle Road Tel: 235-9322 - Fax: 235-9325

SAN VICENTE BRANCH
San Vicente Road
Tel: 234-3176 - Fax: 235-0007

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 276

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Bail out the bailout

No one in Washington has a better view of the global credit markets than Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben S. Bernanke. So when they say the situation is dire, it's not as if a couple of flightless birds were saying the sky was falling.

So why did the House vote down the rescue package Monday that Paulson and Bernanke said was so desperately needed? Blame haste, partisanship, timidity and brinkmanship—they all played a role. More important, though, was Washington's failure to convince taxpayers that a dramatic bailout was vital to their health, not just Wall Street's. The responsibility starts with President Bush, Paulson and Bernanke, but it extends to lawmakers as well. Apparently no one in Congress wanted to be accountable for what amounted to a $700-billion experiment in fiscal intervention. Republicans, who absurdly claimed it was the Democratic majority's responsibility to deliver the votes, sounded thin-skinned when they denounced Speaker Nancy Pelosi's ill-timed criticism of GOP policies. And Democrats, who portrayed the bailout as the work of Republican administration officials, seemed determined not to be left holding the bag for Paulson and Bernanke.

We remain convinced that the problems in the financial industry are real and that they could be poisonous to the entire economy, not just the stock market. Yet the administration's lackluster sales job has allowed opponents of the bailout to promote minimal or Darwinian responses. With lame-duck Bush unable to rally congressional Republicans, the role of deal-closer fell to John McCain. But it's hard for a maverick to impose party discipline; McCain's camp claimed that he moved 61 GOP votes into the yes column, but that still left close to 70 percent voting no. Before the feds can ride to the rescue, someone is going to have to convince more Republicans that it's worth the effort.

Congress may take up a very similar bailout proposal later this week. In the meantime, Bush and top administration officials need to speak more often and more persuasively about the nature of the problem. They need to distance themselves from Paulson's initial request for unfettered authority and embrace the oversight Congress demanded. Meanwhile, lawmakers need to stop trying to turn the bailout plan into a referendum on the administration's policies, presidential candidates or anything other than the specifics of the proposal. Opponents can and should try to reduce its cost and increase market discipline. But they can't pretend that it's someone else's problem to fix.

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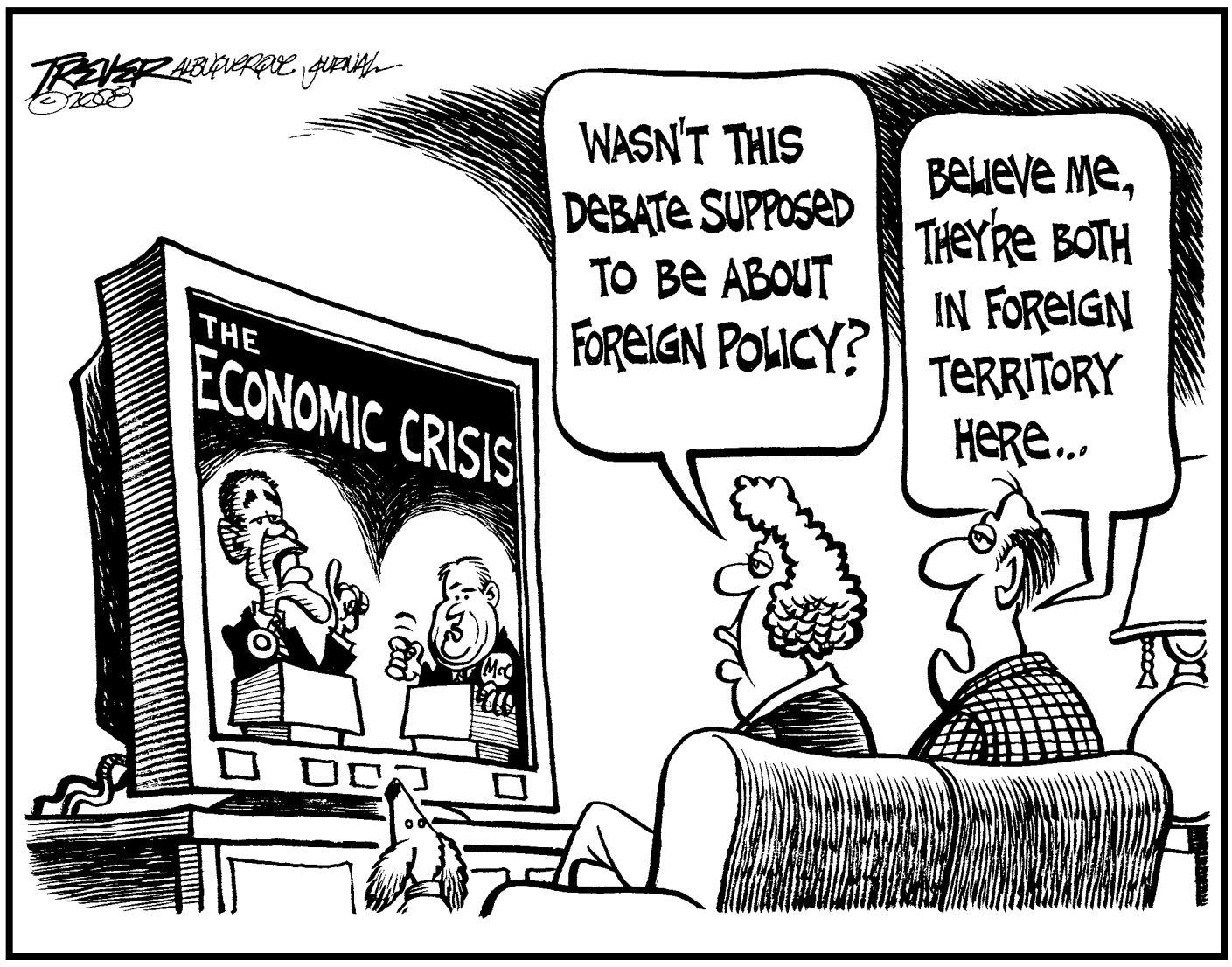

TREVER ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL 2008
THE ECONOMIC CRISIS
WASN'T THIS DEBATE SUPPOSED TO BE ABOUT FOREIGN POLICY?
BELIEVE ME, THEY'RE BOTH IN FOREIGN TERRITORY HERE...

Holiday cheer

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

It seems like the holiday season starts earlier each year. Retailers used to wait until Thanksgiving to display Christmas decorations and then Halloween became the starting blocks for early promotions. Now that October's arrive, you'll soon see Christmas merchandise and stores decorated with bows, ribbons, or Styrofoam snowmen.

November and December represent less than 20 percent of the year, but they are responsible for 30 to 50 percent of the total yearly sales for some businesses. With some of the financial rumblings going on in the U.S., easy credit may be a thing of the past and people will need to start spending within their budget. This will make it more difficult for retailers, especially small businesses that don't have a plan to boost sales during the holidays.

Here are some ideas you can use to help formulate a plan of action in the coming months. Let's start off with the goal, which should be ambitious, or even audacious: To make this holiday season's sales one of your best, despite the sluggish economy, and create momentum that will carry your business into the next year.

In order to accomplish this goal, you should have these four objectives: 1) To get more customers who are new to your business; 2) to get those customers to buy more each time they visit; 3) to get all your customers to return more often and make a purchase; and 4) to get your customers to refer more friends and associates to your business.

Now these are easier said than done, but if you can verbalize and focus on the objectives, you can brainstorm some ideas on how you can accomplish each one. If you implement tactics to achieve all four objectives, it will create a continuous loop, because when your customers start to refer other people, it leads directly into the first objective to get more customers.

Now let's look at some ways to achieve the four objectives. Many business owners have cut expenses to the bone, and only buy things that are essential to their operations or growth of the company. That often means training and advertising are slashed or eliminated because they're considered an expense that produces little return. This could be a big mistake. Some forms of advertising can be a waste of money, but that doesn't mean all advertising should be stopped. Every business experiences customer attrition, so it's important to keep your company and products in the eyes and ears of new consumers. This is especially true when you have holiday sales going on. Advertising is defined as paid, non-personal communication, and there are dozens of ways you can target your message to prospects without spending a bundle. Be sure to test all your ads so you know which ones are working.

Training, especially the type that improves customer service skills or enhances your front-line staff's selling ability can be the best money you will spend to get a huge return. The fact is, very few employees really understand how to effectively sell their company's products. Most of them are merely order takers who wait for customers to wander around, hoping they will find something to buy. The cost to train staff will easily be recovered once they put the ideas into action. Selling means being concerned enough to understand your prospects so you can help them get what they need and want. People love to buy, but don't like to be sold—so help them become better buyers.

Customer service training is one of those "common sense" areas of business that is not so common. Many employees do not know how to offer good customer service because they haven't been trained, nor do they see it practiced much in the CNMI. Great customer service can lead to loyal customers. According to a *Bain and Company* study, a 5-percent increase in customer loyalty can boost profits from 25 to 125 percent over time. *Bain* investigated the connection between loyalty and growth and found that companies with the highest customer loyalty grew twice as much as competitors. Loyal customers are a result of loyal employees, and training is one way you can invest in your people so they perform at their best.

Here are a few more low-cost, high-return tactics you might want to consider: Create strategic alliances with other non-competing businesses so you can share leads or refer customers to each other. Stay in touch with your customers through e-mail, mail, or by calling them occasionally if they contribute significantly to your sales volume. Create a frequency rewards program that offers customers an incentive to return and buy more. There are numerous programs being used, and a simple one is just a card that is marked with each purchase. When the card is completed, the customer gets something free or receives a big discount.

If you would like some more ideas on how to better prepare yourself to increase sales for the holidays, e-mail us to get a free checklist and report that goes into more detail. We hope these suggestions give you some things to think about as we all brave the economic storm that is heading our way. If you get started early enough and work smart using a plan of action, you may find yourself cheering during the holidays, but please hold off on putting up that Styrofoam snowman until at least Halloween is over.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

'Read the economic impact report'

The Friends of the Monument would like to urge Dr. Ignacio Dela Cruz to read the Economic Impact of a Proposed Mariana Trench Marine National Monument authored by University of Guam Economics professor Dr. Tom Iverson. From his recent statements in the media, it would appear that Dr. Dela Cruz did not take the time to read the study. He appears to be confused on some of the numbers and the different sources of funding.

Dr. Dela Cruz is correct in saying that the NOAA official, Allen Tom, cannot take sides; he can only report on what happened in Hawaii with Papahanaumokuakea. According to the *Marianas Variety,* Mr. Tom told Dr. Dela Cruz that the Hawaiian monument created 25 jobs and gets about $8 million in annual federal funding.

The Iverson report predicts that our monument would get approximately one quarter the federal funding of the Hawaiian monument. It predicts that 14 jobs directly funded by the federal government would be created and that the first year of federal funding would total approximately $1.67 million. Federal funding would not be the only source of revenue, however. There would also be an increase in research and education dollars and tourism from the private sector. All told, not just including federal dollars, the monument will create 400 jobs and provide $10 million in direct spending.

If Dr. Dela Cruz does not want to read the entire report, for the sake of expediency he can turn to Table 3 on Page 10 and Table 6 on page 12 of the report. We hope this clears up the confusion.

Leticia Camacho
San Roque, Saipan

High cost is natural barrier

At the risk of disillusioning both advocates and detractors of the proposed Marianas Trench Monument, hordes of tourists—or eco-tourists—visiting the actual site of the monument has never been part of any serious plan, vision, or presupposition for the monument that I know of.

As has been pointed out, the expense alone is prohibitive. On the other hand, it has been suggested that wealthy tourists might be willing to pay those higher costs in exchange for the privilege of visiting the monument area. That would be a "boon" rather than a "bane," to use the language of the *Island Locator*, because per person, wealthier tourists generate more revenue, relatively speaking, than do those less well-to-do, and would most likely prompt an upgrade in at least some of the CNMI's hotels and restaurants to accommodate them—again, good for the local economy. The costs, in other words, would thus provide a "natural" limit to the number of tourists visiting the actual monument area.

Moreover, assuming that the monument would be at least a sanctuary, if not a no-take protected zone, one would not want hordes of tourists in the monument area to begin with. It cannot function as a sanctuary if there are divers or snorkelers or swimmers or banana boats or fishermen all over the place. Thus, the fact that it is far away, and expensive to reach, is a positive value, not a negative one. The more difficult and costly it is to reach, the more effectively it will function as a sanctuary, or marine protected area.

It is possible that some enterprising entrepreneur might decide to offer group tours to the area, in a live-aboard type vessel. Water sports could be offered at the periphery of the monument—where, it is said, marine life would be nearly as prolific as it is projected to be within the monument area.

There have been suggestions that Pagan might be developed to serve as a staging area for those who do plan to visit the monument area—presumably, primarily scientists, researchers—and that a visitor center could be established there displaying research results, photographs, videos, etc. Pagan could serve as a stop along the way for the cruise ships—an added attraction, activity, to attract more tourists, local students on educational excursions, teachers on an educational seminar, or…

Re: the editor's note: The high cost cited for the trip by the present *Tribune* publisher was no doubt due in large part to the cost of hiring the helicopter for the trip. But I don't know how boat costs would compare.

Ruth L. Tighe
Tanapag, Saipan

Real representation for teachers

I asked the governor for a temporary appointment just to show teachers and voters that we still have a governor who prefers his personal brand of politics over "doing the right thing," as he claims. I already knew he wouldn't appoint me because the governor truly doesn't want the problem solved. I discovered the lack of compliance with the Constitution in 1998 and I also have the solution. I don't want the job and I just wanted to make sure teachers don't lose this opportunity that I fought for since 1998. But I'm sure everyone can now see the governor would rather see teachers, the Board and the system in disarray over this before allowing me to get the credit for resolving the matter. This is the brand of politics the stakeholders in the "antonymous" education system are forced to suffer under, even though we *are not* supposed to be subjected to politics. It should also be clear that teachers need to take advantage of the opportunity created by the governor if teachers truly want to have some control and input regarding their employment livelihood. ACT has complained about me, about PRAXIS and about the governor but has yet to accomplish anything.

The big accountability question that the Governor and Mr. Reyes failed to answer was, why not appoint me? They can't answer it because there is no good reason and it is obvious to me and a lot of people that the governor has allowed our difference over federalization to govern his decision instead of doing what is "proper and necessary" to resolve the Teacher Rep. issue. But I'm sure common sense had already dictated to most people that the governor would rather see teachers fail to gain their rights and the Board without a Teacher Rep before he would do the right thing and appoint me with the power to fix this problem. Teachers don't have the necessary leadership and the governor won't lift a finger to help teachers, yet he is the one who started this with his proclamation but he can't finish it like we have witnessed with many of the activities of his administration.

I will organize the teachers at my school and we will select a School Rep and if all the schools will do the same thing, teachers can claim our rights. It will take only one teacher from each school who is willing to speak up for the teachers at their school. We teachers really need some teachers with "civic virtue" and if we can't get one teacher from each school to commit to this personal, employee and civic responsibility to claim our rights, then we don't deserve the rights granted to teachers in the Constitution. Please fax your School's Rep name to me at Kagman High and a copy to ACT at SVE. Once there is a collective of all schools the list will be submitted to the Board for recognition as the exclusive bargaining representative of teachers within the Public School System. Once recognized, these teachers can conduct an election to select the new Teacher Rep who will have the power to be the lead bargaining agent for teachers. Teachers need the *power* and not a *powerless* Teacher Rep as I was forced to be.

I am not going to campaign for teachers to do this as teachers must want their rights and I fully intend to work with ACT if they truly want a solution for all teachers and not just their president. I tried to help teachers with PRAXIS and they didn't listen and ACT even attacked me. I can only pray for their own sake that teachers will take this for the serious matter it is and do what is necessary and proper to claim our rights to improve our working relationship and working conditions as PSS employees. I'm thankful the governor made the decision and I'm disappointed he failed to offer help but at least the veil has been lifted from teachers' eyes and if teachers don't seize the moment now, then there is no hope for teachers to have *real* representation at this point and time.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Former BOE Teacher Rep

'End discriminatory policy vs veterans'

To Sen. Daniel Akaka, chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs and Rep. Bob Filner, chairman, U.S. House Committee on Veterans Affairs

I am writing on behalf of veterans and retired servicemen and servicewomen in the Northern Mariana Islands who will be subjected to discrimination because they are being denied eligibility for the cost of air transportation to obtain VA health care services.

The Veterans Administration does not have medical clinics in the Northern Mariana Islands nor is there a Department of Defense medical facility here. Eligible veterans and service retirees therefore necessarily have to travel to Guam or Honolulu by air to obtain VA health care services at VA or DOD medical facilities.

Despite that the VA has provided for the cost of air transportation for eligible veterans in the past, the veterans and service retirees are now being told by VA officials in Honolulu that VA would no longer provide them transport in association with obtaining VA health care services because the Northern Mariana Islands is considered a "foreign country" for this purpose.

These veterans and retirees have given their all in service to country. They, moreover, meet the benefit qualifications for such services because they have 1) a service-connected (SC) rating of 30 percent or more, or 2) are traveling for treatment of a SC condition, or 3) receive a VA pension, or 4) their income does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate, or 5) are traveling for a scheduled compensation or pension examination.

It is unjust that these veterans and retirees can no longer avail themselves of VA provided means of transportation because VA officials incorrectly determined that the Northern Mariana Islands is a "foreign country" for purposes of providing means of transportation for eligible veterans and retirees wishing to obtain VA health care services not available here. These acts are discriminatory because the Northern Mariana Islands is not a "foreign country" but is a part of the United States of America and, moreover, because VA has provided the services in the past but has just now decided that this service is no longer available to eligible veterans and retirees from the Northern Mariana Islands.

I respectfully ask your Committees to please look into this discriminatory policy of the Veterans Administration and I respectfully further ask that you inform VA officials to immediately put a stop to this discriminatory policy against eligible veterans and retirees from the Northern Mariana Islands.

Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan
Garapan, Saipan

Amendment to budget bill

The 16th Legislature: We applaud all of you for finally addressing a long awaited fiscal year budget. We fully understand the level of frustrations that each one of you endured in putting together such a comprehensive and difficult budget, especially in this economic crunch.

We urge all of you to ignore Charles Reyes' allegations of a political agenda and concentrate on moving forward with this long awaited budget for the Commonwealth government's sake. The most important and critical concern that we have is the reprogramming authority of the governor once the budget is passed.

As the House Ways and Means Committee stated about the proposed $79.2 million lump sum appropriation for the Executive Branch, the Governor could allocate funds in any way he pleases. This is clearly an opportunity for immediate reprogramming once the budget is passed, especially toward funding the lawsuit by the governor against the federal government.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that an amendment be included to apply strict sanctions and criminal charges be brought upon the Executive Branch should any reprogramming of funds take place after the passage of proposed budget.

We completely disagree and oppose this administration's stance on the lawsuit against the federal government and it is our hope that all of you will come together on a unified position for the betterment of our people and our homeland as a whole.

Thank you and good luck to all of you on the passing of the fiscal budget.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Southwest winds 5 to 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲87° ▼77°	▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼76°

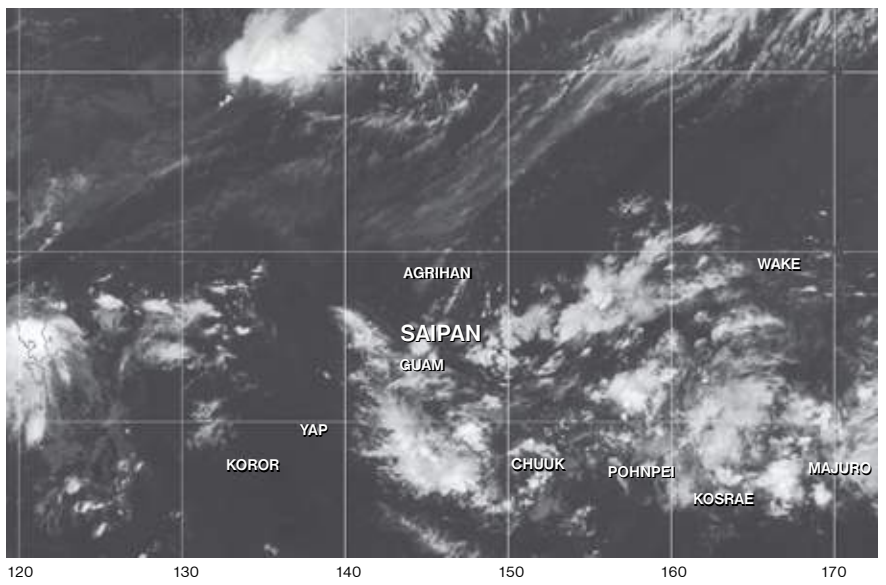
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼76
Palau	Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Thundershowers	▲88	▼73
Kosrae	Thundershowers	▲88	▼76
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼74

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲60	▼53
Beijing	Sunny	▲79	▼59
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Honolulu	Showers	▲84	▼76
London	Showers	▲57	▼45
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲82	▼62
Manila	Rain	▲84	▼77
Melbourne	Sunny	▲78	▼63
Miami	Thundershowers	▲88	▼75
New York	Partly Sunny	▲66	▼51
Osaka	Sunny	▲73	▼58
Paris	Rain	▲58	▼41
Pusan	Sunny	▲77	▼58
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲72	▼56
Salem	Rain	▲68	▼52
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲71	▼57
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲79	▼54
Tokyo	Sunny	▲73	▼57
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲69	▼49

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak circulation centered south of Guam is drifting northwestward with a trough from the center at 8N147E northward to about 17N147E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are within 150 miles of a line from 6N146E to 17N142E. This includes the southern Mariana Islands. Another weak circulation is just north of Kosrae near 9N164E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are near Kosrae and Pohnpei or within an area bounded by a line from 13N163E to 9N169E to 5N162E to 12N156E back to 13N163E. An upper-level low is centered west of Wake Island at 19N156E. Divergence related to this low is causing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms within an area bounded by a line from 22N158E to 18N163E to 14N156E to 16N151E back to 22N158E. Trade-wind convergence across the Marshall Islands is causing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms in two areas. One area is within 100 miles of a line from 7N170E to 16N176E. The other area is bounded by a line from 9N174E to 9N178E to 5N177E to 7N172E back to 9N174E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
3:19AM Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
9:49AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
3:36PM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
8:43PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:07AM	6:06 PM
Friday	6:07AM	6:05 PM
Saturday	6:07AM	6:04 PM
Sunday	6:07AM	6:03 PM
Monday	6:07AM	6:03 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	8:16AM	7:51PM
Friday	9:08AM	8:35PM
Saturday	10:01AM	9:22PM
Sunday	10:54AM	10:11PM
Monday	11:54AM	11:03PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 099	5:00am	7:30am	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily
NW 075	4:55pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:20pm	6:55pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,5
Saipan-Shanghai			
FM 844	3:15am	5:55am	2,6
Rota-Guam			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7
Guam-Manila			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:50pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	4,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:50pm	2:15am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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Business

Senate to vote on rescue plan with added tax cut

WASHINGTON (AP)—In a bold bid to revive President Bush's multibillion-dollar financial rescue plan, Senate leaders scheduled a vote for Wednesday night on a version of the bill that adds substantial tax cuts meant to appeal to Republicans when it reaches the House.

The goal is to net at least 12 more House votes than the rescue proposal received Monday, when lawmakers rocked the political and financial worlds by rejecting it.

The gambit is certain to anger some conservative House Democrats, who object to tax cuts that are not offset with spending cuts. But Senate strategists assume it will gain more House votes than it will lose.

If so, Congress would be poised to pass landmark legislation giving the government billions of dollars to buy deeply discounted mortgage-backed securities that are choking off credit and roiling the markets.

The strategy is risky because some House members might see it as a high-handed move by senators. Senate passage of a bailout measure has seemed assured all along. The showdown is in the House, but now the Senate is trying to force the House's hand.

Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., called it "a brilliant move" that will "help pick up votes on both sides of the aisle."

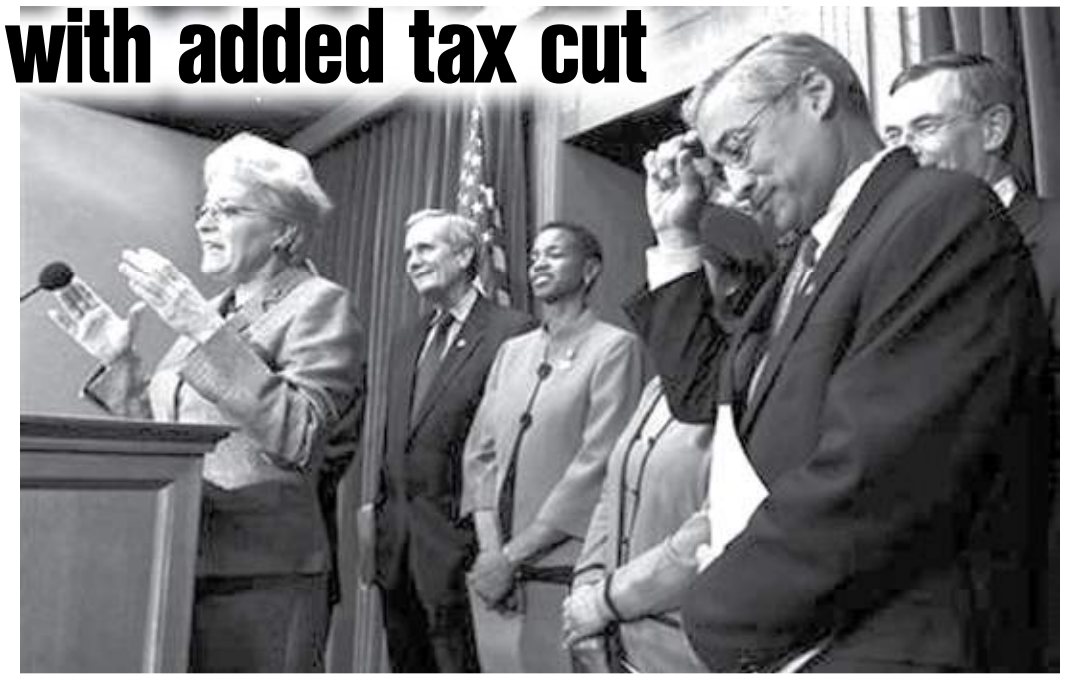
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's reaction was much cooler. "The Senate has made a decision about how to proceed and what can pass that body," the California Democrat said. "The Senate will vote tomorrow night, and the Congress will work its will."

The new approach, announced Tuesday night by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., would tack large and contentious tax measures to the bailout bill. Senate leaders figure the House will have to approve it because the tax cuts are too appealing to Republicans and the financial rescue plan will still seem essential to most Democrats.

The Senate approach uses big, game-changing amendments. House leaders earlier were considering the smallest possible tweaks to the bill in hopes of picking up 12 more votes.

The Senate bill would raise federal deposit insurance limits to $250,000 from $100,000, as called for presidential nominees Barack Obama and John McCain only hours earlier.

House Minority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, praised the move, but many Democrats had signaled approval as well.



Rep. Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, left, speaks during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008, to discuss a financial bailout plan. From left are, Kaptur, Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, Rep. Donna Edwards, D-Md., Rep. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii, hidden in green, Rep. Bobby Scott, D-Va., and Rep. Rush Holt, D-N.J.

AP

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Most Asian markets recover on hopes for US bailout

TOKYO (AP)—Most Asian markets bounced back Wednesday on hopes that a $700 billion bailout for the U.S. financial system will soon win legislative approval in Washington, although doubts persisted about the long-term outlook for the global economy. Japan's Nikkei 225 index, the benchmark for Asia's biggest bourse, gained 139.74 points, or 1.24 percent, to 11,399.60 by the end of the morning session. On Tuesday, it plunged 4.1 percent to its lowest in more than three years on disappointment that the U.S. House of Representatives had rejected the bank rescue package aimed at stabilizing the U.S. financial system. Australia's key index jumped more than 3 percent after tumbling 4.3 percent the previous day. South Korea's market erased earlier gains to slide into negative territory.

Oil rises in Asia to $101 on bailout plan hopes

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices rose to above $101 a barrel Wednesday in Asia on expectations that U.S. lawmakers will pass a revised bank bailout plan that they rejected earlier this week. Light, sweet crude for November delivery was up 79 cents to $101.43 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday in Singapore. Prices rose overnight $4.27 to settle at $100.64. U.S. Senate leaders scheduled a vote for Wednesday on a version of the emergency bill that adds substantial tax cuts meant to appeal to Republicans when it reaches the House of Representatives. The House rejected a similar $700 billion plan Monday by a vote of 228-205. But traders were skeptical a bailout of bad mortgage debt would quickly reverse slowing global economic growth and weakening demand for crude.

Consumers in gloomy mood on cusp of holiday season

NEW YORK (AP)—With the holiday shopping season about to start, consumer confidence is hovering near the lowest it's been since President Bush's father was commander in chief. It may dip further as Americans open their 401(k) statements and see how much they've lost in the last few weeks. The Conference Board said Tuesday that its Consumer Confidence Index is now at 59.8. That's up slightly from a revised 58.5 in August and higher than analysts expected. But it's still about half what it was a year ago and near the lowest since the index registered 54.6 in October 1992 when the economy was coming out of a recession. Now George H. W. Bush's son is wrestling with his own economic crisis.

NMPASI
NORTHERN MARIANAS PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEMS, INC.

NMPASI SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT

The Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI) is asking the general public for comments about its proposed Statement of Goals & Priorities for fiscal year 2009. The local non-profit organization is applying for grant funds from the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**/Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)/Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)/Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), the **U.S. Department of Education (DOE)**/ Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and the **Social Security Administration (SSA)**. In general, NMPASI proposes through each of its respective applications to carry out the following:

STATEMENT OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
(FY 2009)

GOAL 1: To ensure that individuals with disabilities in institutional and/or community settings (1) re not subject to *abuse/neglect*, (2) are *free from discrimination*, (3) are provided with an *appropriate education*, (4) are provided *appropriate health care services*, and (5) are provided with opportunities to make *informed decisions about their lives as independent, contributing members of the community*.

Objective 1.1: In fiscal year 2009, P&A personnel will provide direct representation for eligible persons with disabilities by conducting intervention strategies of reported cases of abuse and/or neglect to include, but not be limited to, short-term assistance, investigations, technical assistance, administrative remedies, negotiation/mediation, and/or legal remedies;

Objective 1.2: In fiscal year 2009, P&A personnel will conduct and/or facilitate trainings relating to the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities, to people with disabilities, their families and/or other members of the community;

Objective 1.3: In fiscal year 2009, P&A personnel will disseminate information relating to the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities to the community at large via local media and/or other mediums for information dissemination;

Objective 1.4: In fiscal year 2009, P&A personnel will provide Information & Referral and/or Technical Assistance to interested individuals about issues relating to the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities in institutional and/or community settings;

Objective 1.5: In fiscal year 2009, P&A personnel will monitor the provision of services provided in institutional and/or community settings, to ensure persons with disabilities are not subject to abuse and/or neglect and to insure that their rights are duly protected; and

Objective 1.6: In fiscal year 2009, P&A personnel will receive training in current issues, practices and/or laws relating to people with disabilities, to ensure a more effective and efficient system of protection and advocacy services.

For comments, please call the NMPASI office at (670) 235-7273/4 [voice] or 235-7275 [fax] or 235-7278 [tty] or contact us via the internet at www.nmpasi.com

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

AP source: Bloomberg wants 3rd term as NYC mayor

NEW YORK (AP)—Mayor Michael Bloomberg has decided to try to reverse the term-limits law he had long supported so he can seek a third term next year and help the city emerge from financial turmoil, a person close to the mayor told The Associated Press on Tuesday. Bloomberg made the decision over the weekend and will announce it Thursday, according to the person, who has been briefed on the matter but spoke on condition of anonymity because the announcement hasn't been made. The person said the mayor has been wrestling with the decision for the past couple of months. The billionaire former CEO will cite the nation's precarious economic situation as the reason that New York needs a tested financial manager to stay and guide the city, the person said. The mayor, founder of the multibillion-dollar financial data firm Bloomberg LP, is reported to be worth an estimated $20 billion.

$28M settlement reached in Big Dig death lawsuit

BOSTON (AP)—The family of a woman killed when a Big Dig tunnel ceiling collapsed has settled a wrongful death lawsuit for more than $28 million, attorneys told The Associated Press. The settlement was announced Tuesday night by attorneys for the husband and three adult children of Milena Del Valle, who was killed in July 2006 when part of a tunnel ceiling collapsed on her car. The main defendants in the lawsuit included companies that worked on the Big Dig - Bechtel/Parsons Brinckerhoff, Modern Continental Co., Gannett Fleming Inc.- and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, which had charge of the massive highway project. Brad Henry, an attorney for Del Valle's children, said the settlement resolves claims against all 15 defendants. He said the companies do not admit to liability in the settlement. Henry said he could not provide a breakdown of how much each defendant will pay.

Close friend turns star witness in Stevens trial

WASHINGTON (AP)—A longtime friend of Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens crossed the powerful lawmaker Tuesday and testified that he gave the Republican senator thousands of dollars in gifts. The fiercely loyal Stevens gave no indication he even saw former fishing and drinking buddy Bill Allen enter the courtroom, and the two men barely looked at each other as Allen testified about the expensive gifts he gave Stevens during their 26-year friendship. Stevens, 84, is on trial for failing to disclose about $250,000 in gifts and favors on Senate financial documents. "That's Ted, right over there," Allen said, pointing across the crowded courtroom to an expressionless Stevens. At the heart of the case is a massive home renovation project in which Allen helped transform the senator's small A-frame cabin into a two-story home with a garage, sauna, wine cellar and wraparound porches.

Obama, McCain seek political gain in credit crisis

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—White House rivals John McCain and Barack Obama combined televised attack ads with statesmanlike appeals for bipartisanship on Tuesday as they vied for political gain in the shadow of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

Both men spoke privately with President Bush about the collapse of the financial industry, then publicly made clear their differences with him, McCain more gently than his Democratic rival.

■ ■ ■

CLEVELAND (AP)—In the state that may again determine the presidency, voters started casting ballots Tuesday as Barack Obama struggles to thwart a John McCain victory in Ohio four years after it tipped the election to President Bush.

Both candidates visit often while spending millions of dollars flooding TV and radio with advertisements, mailboxes with literature and even voicemail with automated phone calls to get supporters to the polls, particularly during the one-week window in which people can register and vote in one swoop.

Early participation appeared light; officials in the state's largest counties that are home to Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo and Dayton each reported several hundred ballots cast by afternoon. Many of those who voted cited convenience.

■ ■ ■

The Republican, campaigning in Iowa, pointedly told reporters there were steps the administration could still take "with the stroke of the pen to help alleviate the crisis gripping our economy. I urge them to do so."

McCain mentioned using a federal stabilization fund to back uninsured money market accounts. The Treasury Department is already using the fund to guarantee money market mutual funds, which were the only uninsured money market accounts. Treasury announced that program Sept. 19 after the failure of Lehman Bros. produced a surge of withdrawals from such funds.

The GOP candidate also suggested wielding authority to purchase $1 trillion in mortgages. A housing bill Bush signed July 30 included $300 billion in new loan authority for the government to back cheaper mortgages for troubled homeowners. The failed bailout bill would have added another $700 billion in authority to deal with troubled housing investments.

AP

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama D-Ill., speaks at a rally in front of Morrill Hall at the University of Nevada at Reno in Reno, Nev. Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008.

Debate offers Palin, Biden high risks, big rewards

NEW YORK (AP)—For an audition to be second fiddle, Thursday's debate between often ill-informed newcomer Sarah Palin and often gaffe-prone veteran Joe Biden offers unusually large pitfalls—and promise.

For once, the whole world may be watching. Already, 3,100 media credentials have been issued, the most the Commission on Presidential Debates ever needed in seven vice presidential debates it's hosted.

The attention is driven by the public's fascination with Palin, the first-term Alaska governor that Republican presidential candidate John McCain plucked from relative political obscurity to be his running mate.

Initially, Palin was praised as a superb political communicator for the delivery of her acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention four weeks ago. She energized the party's conservative base, which had reservations about McCain, and quickly showed she could outdraw McCain on the stump—a likely factor in their decision to appear together more often than running mates usually do.

But a series of shaky Palin television interviews have left even some conservatives questioning whether she is ready to be vice president.

East LA seeks to become a city of its own

LOS ANGELES (AP)—East L.A.—birthplace of the lowrider, Los Lobos and Oscar de la Hoya—is to Mexican-Americans what Harlem is to the black community. Now it wants to become its own city. Commonly mistaken for a part of Los Angeles, East L.A. is actually an unincorporated section of Los Angeles County, with more than 130,000 people—96 percent of them Latino—packed into 7.4 square miles.

Cityhood proponents complain that East L.A. is treated as an afterthought by the county Board of Supervisors, and they want the community to take charge of its own destiny.

"We're a nationally branded area," said Diana Tarango, vice president of the East Los Angeles Residents Association, the prime backer of the effort. "We should be making our own decisions about planting trees on the street or putting up light poles."

While outsiders often see the area as gang-plagued and poverty-ridden, East L.A. possesses cultural and political symbolism for Mexican-Americans.

Fernando Guerra, director of the Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University, pronounced East L.A. "the epicenter of Latino culture."

For decades, East L.A. has been a first stop for immigrants just over the border, though these days there are nearly as many Salvadoran pupuserias selling filled tortilla patties as Mexican taquerias selling tacos. Neighborhoods seem plucked straight from Latin American villages: a backyard rooster can be heard crowing, or a man peddles the rice-based drink horchata from a shopping cart. Brilliantly colored murals of the Virgin of Guadalupe and Aztec chieftains decorate walls of housing projects and corner grocery stores.

In the 1960s and '70s, the community was the focus of the burgeoning Chicano civil-rights movement.

In 1970, police and thousands of Chicano anti-Vietnam war protesters battled in the street, and Los Angeles Times columnist Ruben Salazar was killed in the melee.

AP

Pedestrians cross Whittier Blvd. in unincorporated East Los Angeles Saturday, July 19, 2008. A group of residents has launched a campaign to make the area a municipality governed by its own elected officials and ordinances, instead of by the county of Los Angeles.

Robber convicted of infamous KFC murders in Texas

BRYAN, Texas (AP)—A robber who had been convicted of perjury in the long-unsolved killings of five people abducted from a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant 25 years ago was convicted of murder Tuesday.

Darnell Hartsfield, 47, of Tyler, was found guilty on all five counts in one of the longest unresolved mass murder cases in Texas. He received five automatic life sentences, which State District Judge Clay Gossett ordered be served consecutively. Prosecutors chose not to seek the death penalty.

Hartsfield

The jury deliberated less than two hours on a case that took years of bad leads to get to trial and was moved more than 100 miles from where the killings occurred because of publicity. One earlier suspect was absolved when a fingernail originally matched to him turned out to be that of a victim's.

Asia

HK says Cadbury melamine levels acceptable

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong authorities said the amount of melamine found in samples of chocolate made at British candy maker Cadbury's Beijing factory was legally acceptable for human consumption.

Tuesday's announcement came a day after the company recalled 11 items sold in parts of Asia and the Pacific.

Hong Kong's Center for Food Safety said it ran tests on six Cadbury products, two of which had been made in Beijing and had been recalled, and found them to have melamine levels lower than the territory's legal limit of 2.5 parts per million. It did not say whether it was testing the other nine products being recalled.

Cadbury said the Hong Kong test results did not change their decision to recall the products from the Beijing plant.

"It was tested as satisfactory but we are still withdrawing it," said Simon Taylor, head of corporate relations and communications at Cadbury. "That makes no change from what Cadbury announced on Monday."

Baby formula containing melamine has been blamed for killing four babies and sickening more than 50,000 in mainland China. The state-run China News Service says 27 people have been arrested so far in connection with the scandal.

Since melamine-tainted infant formula was uncovered in China, the banned chemical as been found in an array of food products forcing a wave of recalls, mostly in Asia.

Experts say some amount of melamine, which is used to make plastics and fertilizers, may be transferred from the environment during food processing.

But in China's case, suppliers trying to boost output are believed to have diluted their milk, adding melamine because its nitrogen content can fool tests aimed at verifying protein content.

On Tuesday, China's President Hu Jintao made his strongest public comments yet regarding the scandal

"We need to ensure that all products on the market are up to standard, so that consumers don't have to worry," Hu said during a tour of dairy farms broadcast on China Central Television's evening news.

AP

Cadbury chocolates are seen in a store in Beijing Monday Sept. 29, 2008. British chocolate Cadbury said in a statement issued Monday by its Singapore office that tests had "cast doubt on the integrity of a range of our products manufactured in China."

New tests find melamine in 31 Chinese milk brands

BEIJING (AP)—Melamine tainting has been found in another 31 brands of Chinese milk powder, the state product safety administration reported Wednesday.

The results, shown on the administration's Web site, indicate a further widening of the scandal that has sparked massive product recalls in China and countries that received Chinese food exports ranging from infant formula to chocolate.

The contamination is blamed for the deaths of four children and kidney ailments among 54,000 others

The State Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said it tested samples from 265 brands produced before Sept. 14.

Nine of the brands containing dangerous levels of melamine were produced by the company at the center of the scandal, Sanlu, a 43 percent stake of which is owned by New Zealand dairy cooperative Fonterra. No date for the testing was given.

Melamine, which is high in nitrogen and used to make plastics and fertilizer, is believed to have been added to watered-down milk to mask the resulting protein deficiency and fool quality tests.

Melamine can cause kidney stones, leading to kidney failure. Infants are particularly vulnerable.

Results of earlier tests found dangerous levels of melamine in infant formula and other milk products from 22 Chinese dairy companies, while liquid milk and baked goods in which milk powder was used have also been affected.

Police have arrested 27 people in connection with the scandal, which was worsened by an apparent cover-up by companies involved and a refusal by safety officials to heed warnings from parents and doctors.

Afghanistan seeks Saudi help to talk with Taliban

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Afghanistan's president said Tuesday he has repeatedly asked Saudi Arabia's king to facilitate peace talks with the Taliban.

Hamid Karzai said Afghan officials have traveled to Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in hopes of ending the country's six-year conflict but there have not been any negotiations so far.

"For the last two years, I've sent letters to the king of Saudi Arabia, and I've sent messages, and I requested from him as the leader of the Islamic world, for the security and prosperity of Afghanistan and for reconciliation in Afghanistan ... he should help us," Karzai said in a message to Afghans to mark the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr.

Saudi Arabia is a leader of the Sunni Muslim world and the location of Islam's two holiest shrines in Mecca and Medina. It was one of a handful of countries that recognized the strictly Islamic Taliban as rulers of Afghanistan in the 1990s.

Even after their ouster by a U.S.-led invasion in 2001, Saudi kept its doors open for Taliban members to make the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina.

While al-Qaida leader Osama bin-Laden, a Saudi, has frequently railed against the U.S.-allied kingdom, his sympathizers among the Afghan Taliban have been muted in their criticism.

New Pakistan spy chief seen as tough against militants

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan's army chief named a general considered a hawk in the fight against al-Qaida and the Taliban to head the country's powerful spy agency, asserting his control at a time of U.S. concern that rogue operatives are aiding Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan.

Lt. Gen. Ahmed Shujaa Pasha oversaw military offensives against militants in the lawless border regions with Afghanistan in his most recent job as director general of military operations.

His appointment as head of the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI, the country's main spy agency, was part of a broader shake-up of army top brass announced late Monday by military chief Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani.

The moves were seen as a bid by the reform-minded general to revive the prestige of Pakistan's armed forces and assert control over the spy agency following the downfall of ex-President Gen. Pervez Musharraf in August.

A month earlier, the Pakistani government reportedly tried to bring the ISI under the control of the civilian Interior Ministry but quickly reversed the decision after military dissent.

Pasha, who commanded U.N. troops in Sierra Leone in 2001-2002 and was appointed by the world body as an adviser on peacekeeping operations last year, replaces Lt. Gen. Nadeem Taj, a close aide to Musharraf.

ASIAN BRIEFS

US nuclear envoy to bring new proposal to NKorea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The chief U.S. nuclear negotiator with North Korea will propose a face-saving compromise during a trip Wednesday to the isolated communist nation to try to salvage the derailed disarmament pact, U.S. officials said. Envoy Christopher Hill said his goal was to persuade North Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan to agree to Washington's demand for a verification system to account for the North's nuclear arsenal. But he acknowledged it would be a difficult task. The North has rejected U.S. requests on verification and accused Washington of not living up to its end of the deal and removing North Korea from a list of state sponsors of terrorism. It recently reversed the process of dismantling its nuclear facilities.

6 trapped Filipino miners rescued after 1 week

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The miners prayed, first in the light from their lanterns, then in the dark when the batteries failed. Their only sustenance was rain water. But after a week trapped underground by flash flooding—their attempts to swim to safety stymied by high, fast-moving water—six of them have been pulled to safety. The fate of eight others remained uncertain Tuesday. "All of us are so happy we made it out alive," said 22-year-old Antonio Pagulayan, speaking to The Associated Press by phone from a hospital bed as he and two other survivors, intravenous drips in their arms, chewed betel nuts while celebrating their rescue with relatives. Hope for survivors had diminished with each passing day since the men entered the gold mine in the mountain township of Itogon during a typhoon Sept. 22 that rapidly flooded the tunnels. The bodies of two miners were retrieved Sept. 25.

Japan's opposition leader blasts ruling party

TOKYO (AP)—The head of Japan's main opposition party blasted the ruling Liberal Democratic Party on Wednesday, saying it lacks principles and vision, and demanded quick parliamentary elections. Ichiro Ozawa, leader of the opposition Democratic Party of Japan, said in a speech before parliament that the resignations of two prime ministers in a row showed the ruling LDP was unfit to lead the country. The LDP has firm control of the lower house and so effectively picks the prime minister from its ranks. "It's unbelievable that the LDP president holds the seat of prime minister again, after the two previous LDP chiefs threw their jobs away," Ozawa said.

Police: Fire kills 15 at Japan private video rooms

TOKYO (AP)—A pre-dawn fire killed at least 15 people and injured 10 at a shop where customers rent videos and watch them in private rooms in the western Japanese city of Osaka, police and news reports said Wednesday. The blaze broke out at around 3:00 a.m. in the video rental shop on the first floor of a seven-story building in downtown Osaka, an Osaka police spokesman said on condition of anonymity, citing department policy. The fire burned the ceiling and walls of the shop, the spokesman said. Authorities were investigating the cause of the fire. Kyodo News agency said the 15 dead were male customers and that the cause of death was believed to be carbon monoxide poisoning.

World

US 'casino' mentality blamed for planet's meltdown

SAO PAULO, Brazil (AP)—Astounded by the U.S. government's failure to resolve the financial crisis threatening the foundations of the global free market, fingers of blame are pointing at America from around the planet.

Latin American leaders say the U.S. must quickly fix the financial crisis it created before the rest of the world's hard-won economic gains are lost.

"The managers of big business took huge risks out of greed," said President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, whose economy is highly dependent on U.S. trade. "What happens in the United States will affect the entire world and, above all, small countries like ours."

In Europe, where some blame a phenomenon of "casino capitalism" that has become deeply engrained from New York to London to Moscow, there is more of a sense of shared responsibility. But Europeans also blame the U.S. government for letting things get out of hand.

Amid harsh criticism is a growing consensus that stricter financial regulation is needed to prevent unfettered capitalism from destroying economies around the globe.

And leaders of developing nations that kept spending tight and opened their economies in response to American demands are warning of other consequences—a loss of U.S. influence globally and the likelihood that the world's poor will suffer the most from greed by the biggest players in global finance.

"They spent the last three decades saying we needed to do our chores. They didn't," a grim-faced Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said Tuesday.

Even staunch U.S. allies like Colombian President Alvaro Uribe blasted the world's most powerful country for egging on uncontrolled financial speculation that he compared to a wild horse with no reins.

"The whole world has financed the United States, and I believe that they have a reciprocal debt with the planet," he said.

It's harder for European leaders to point the finger directly at the United States since many of their financiers participated in the recklessness. London was home to the division of failed insurer AIG that racked up huge losses on credit-default swaps, and many reputable European banks disregarded risk to load up on higher yielding subprime assets.

But the House's rejection Monday of the U.S. bank bailout proposed by Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson provoked a sharper tone and warnings that America must act. Though global markets on Tuesday recovered some of the ground they lost in a worldwide slide the day before, politicians from Europe to South America insisted the risk of a further plunge remains high.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel called on U.S. lawmakers to pass a package this week, saying it was the "precondition for creating new confidence on the markets - and that is of incredibly great significance."

In an unusually blunt statement from the 27-country European Union, EU Commission spokesman Johannes Laitenberger said: "The United States must take its responsibility in this situation, must show statesmanship for the sake of their own country, and for the sake of the world."

Iraq forces gain more control, but lose more lives

BAGHDAD (AP)—The number of Iraqi security forces killed in September rose by nearly a third to 159 compared with the same period last year, Associated Press figures showed Tuesday. U.S. troop deaths for the same period fell by nearly 40 percent to 25.

The figures are a sign that U.S. military is increasingly relying on the Iraqis, including U.S.-allied Sunni fighters, to take the lead in operations so they can assume responsibility for their own security and let the Americans eventually withdraw.

Overall civilian casualty figures remained relatively low despite a spate of deadly attacks in Baghdad and surrounding areas during the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, which ends Tuesday for Sunnis and Thursday for most Shiites.

But even as Iraqi security forces are taking the lead and violence in the country has plunged some 80 percent over the past 15 months, cautious Pentagon leaders have resisted calls for more rapid and hefty troop pullouts. Instead, top commanders insist the security situation remains fragile, and the improvements reversible.

One potential source of conflict comes this week, when the Shiite-led government begins to assume authority over tens of thousands of Sunni fighters who turned against al-Qaida in Iraq. Six U.S. Army brigades, a National Guard unit, and three military headquarters have been ordered to deploy to Iraq next summer, the Pentagon announced Tuesday, in a move that would allow the U.S. to keep the number of troops largely steady there through much of next year.

There are now about 150,000 U.S. troops in Iraq. At least 4,176 members of the U.S. military have died in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003, according to an AP count.

In the latest attack on U.S. troops, an American soldier was killed by small-arms fire Tuesday in northern Baghdad - one of only eight U.S. deaths during fighting in September. The rest were a result of noncombat incidents, including seven who died in a helicopter crash and several in vehicle accidents.

That was in sharp contrast to the number of Iraqi security forces who were killed in attacks.

At least 159 Iraqi police, soldiers and Sunni armed guards who have joined forces with the Americans against al-Qaida in Iraq were killed in September, 33 percent more than the 120 killed in September 2007, according to AP figures that are based on reports from police and hospital officials.

Canada opposition party accuses PM of plagiarism

TORONTO (AP)—A senior campaign staffer for the governing Conservative Party resigned Tuesday after admitting he wrote a speech for Prime Minister Stephen Harper that plagiarized another leader's address urging support for the U.S.-led war in Iraq.

The opposition Liberals released transcripts and video of speeches delivered by then-Australian Prime Minister John Howard on March 18, 2003, and one by Harper two days later in the Canadian Parliament when Harper was the opposition leader.

Liberal foreign affairs spokesman Bob Rae said nearly half of Harper's speech was a word-for-word recitation of Howard's comments.

"How does a political leader in Canada's Parliament, on such a crucial issue, end up giving the exact same speech as another country's leader?" Rae said during a speech in Toronto as the parties campaign for national elections next month.

Rae said it was further evidence "of how Canada's foreign policy is now in lockstep with the right-wing foreign policy of the Bush administration."

Conservative campaign worker Owen Lippert resigned later in the day after taking responsibility for the speech. He said he worked in Harper's office in 2003 and wrote the speech calling for Canadian troops to be sent to Iraq.

"Pressed for time, I was overzealous in copying segments of another world leader's speech," Lippert said in a statement.

He said neither Harper nor anyone else in Harper's office had any idea he copied from Howard's speech.

Rae said a number of lines from Howard's speech were also duplicated in a guest column in The Wall Street Journal under Harper's byline on March 29, 2003. He said duplicated lines also appeared under Harper's byline in columns in the Toronto Star, National Post and Ottawa Citizen.

EU monitors start patrols in Georgia

AP

Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili, right, greets EU Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana in Tbilisi, Georgia, Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008.

GORI, Georgia (AP)—European Union monitors on Wednesday began their patrols of Georgian territory under a French-brokered peace deal, facing a feisty Russian military that seemed reluctant to retreat.

The Russian peacekeeping forces said a day earlier they will not immediately allow any of the 300 EU monitors to enter a buffer zone surrounding the separatist South Ossetia region. Moscow appears to be stalling on compliance with a cease-fire agreement reached after the August war with Georgia.

"Show the flag, be friendly, show confidence," EU mission head Hansjoerg Haber told monitors in an area near Lake Basaleti, about 12 miles north of the Georgian capital, Tbilisi.

Russia and Georgia agreed to the EU observer mission as part of an updated cease-fire plan following the war, which ended with Russian and separatist forces in control of the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Russian troops also remained deep inside Georgia for weeks.

As part of the deal, Moscow agreed to withdraw its forces completely from territories outside of South Ossetia and Abkhazia within 10 days of the EU monitors' deployment on Wednesday - including from a roughly 4-mile buffer zone extending southward from South Ossetia's edge.

But the Russian peacekeeping forces' statement said that as of Wednesday, the EU monitoring will take place "up to the southern border of the security zone, which was agreed upon by the parties." The statement said there would be further consulta-

Pirates say they celebrated Muslim holiday aboard ship

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP)—Somali pirates said Tuesday they celebrated a Muslim holiday aboard a hijacked freighter and denied reports that three comrades were killed in a shootout on the vessel, which is being closely watched by a half-dozen U.S. warships.

The hijacking of the MV Faina—laden with 33 Soviet-made T-72 tanks, rifles and heavy weapons that U.S. defense officials have said included rocket launchers - was the highest-profile act of piracy in the dangerous waters this year. The U.S. Navy has said it wants to keep the arms out of the hands of militants linked to al-Qaida in impoverished Somalia, a key battleground in the war on terrorism.

The pirates are demanding $20 million in ransom for the ship, which they boarded Thursday in the Indian Ocean off the Somali coast. There was a crew of 21 Russians and Ukrainians aboard, but the captain later died.

U.S. officials said 40-50 pirates were involved, but only about 30 were on the ship itself.

A Kenyan maritime official cited an unconfirmed report that three of the pirates were killed Monday night in a dispute over whether to surrender. Speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk on the record, a U.S. official in Washington said he believed that report was true. But the Pentagon had not confirmed the report by late Tuesday.

A spokesman for the pirates said the shootout report was false.

"We are happy on the ship, and we are celebrating" Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, spokesman Sugule Ali told The Associated Press by satellite telephone. "Nothing has changed."

"We didn't dispute over a single thing, let alone have a shootout," Ali said.

Attempts to contact him later Tuesday failed. A man answering his phone said Ali was "very tired" and was asleep.

The vessel, anchored off the central Somali town of Hobyo, is surrounded by U.S. warships and helicopters. Moscow has dispatched a warship to the scene to protect the lives of the Russians aboard the captive vessel.

Piracy is a lucrative criminal racket in the region, bringing in tens of millions of dollars a year. There have been 24 reported attacks in Somalia this year, according to the International Maritime Bureau.

Defense Department spokesman Geoff Morrell said officials are working on securing the region's waterways but he gave no details. He told reporters at the Pentagon that the piracy issue "has drawn the attention of high-ranking people within this building."

Environment

Take climate change by storm!

You can start at home by implementing the following steps:

1. Switch to renewable energy

Buy non-polluting green electricity from your electricity company. If they don't sell it, can you change power companies to one that does? Get your school, company or community to buy renewable energy, too.

2. Buy energy efficient appliances

If you're buying a washing machine, refrigerator, dish washer or oven, buy the most energy-efficient model you can afford. They might be more expensive but they pay for themselves through lower energy bills. The same is true for office equipment like computers, copiers, printers.

Look out for appliances on at http://www.topten.info (Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium) or the Energy Star label (US).

3. Fluorescent lamps are cheaper in the long run

Replace the lights you use most with compact fluorescent lamps. They cost more than ordinary lamps but you end up saving money because they use only around one-quarter of the electricity to prove the same light. And they last four times as long as a normal light bulb!

4. Avoid stand-by and turn off lights

Turn off televisions, videos, stereos and computers when they are not in use—they can use between 10 and 60 percent of the power they use when on "stand by". Turn off lights when you don't need them—it saves energy already after a minute or two. Turn off computer screens when you take a break.

5. Wash economically

Use the washing machine or dish washer only when you have a full load. Use washing powder suitable for low temperature washes and use economy programs.

6. About your fridge

Don't leave fridge doors open for longer than necessary, let food cool down fully before putting it in the fridge or freezer, defrost regularly and keep at the right temperature. Where possible don't stand cookers and fridges/freezers next to each other.

7. Getting around and on your way to work and school

When you want to make short journeys, try walking! Use a bicycle for short trips and local shopping. It keeps you fit too and is fun too!

8. About your car

If you have to buy a car, buy a fuel-efficient, environmentally friendly one. This will save you money and keep more CO2 from going into the atmosphere. Make sure that your tires are inflated correctly—this can save you 5 percent on the cost of your fuel. Turn off your engine when waiting in your car.

9. Reduce your air travel

When you travel to your holiday destination by plane you are contributing to significant emissions of climate change causing carbon dioxide. So take vacations nearer to home, or when you fly, consider buying carbon offsets to compensate for the emissions caused by your flight.

10. Enjoy the sun! :-)

Fit solar panels on the roof of your home. Turn your own home into a clean power station!

We can all do something right away. And if we all do, something will undoubtedly change. Everyone has a responsibility to the world we live in now and the world we will leave to future generations. Take a first step to reduce your carbon footprint and "Take the Right Route" October 10th by walking, running, biking, or carpooling to work or school. You will save one pound of CO2 for every mile you don't drive, save money, and maybe even your waistline.

Individuals, schools, and organizations that participate will receive a FREE pair of "Walk it, Don't Drive it" zories, water bottle, or lanyard.

Remember Every Act Counts!!!

To Sign Up for Take the Right Route on Oct. 10 contact Laruen Sanchez or Noberto Mendiola at the CNMI Energy Office at 664-4480/1 or energy@pticom.com. ***(CoCo)***

Restore Laulau Bay

Last week, we learned about general attributes of a watershed. This week, let's take a stroll over to Saipan's east coast, specifically, the Laulau watershed.

Up to 200 dives are performed each day at the Laulau site, earning the title of Saipan's best all-weather dive site. Island residents also continue to enjoy the area for various recreation activities.

Laulau bay is also special because it is a turtle nesting habitat and is an archaeological site.

However, sedimentation from the access roads and stream crossings continue to threaten the coral reefs. There continues to be beach driving and litter from parties on the beach.

In fact, the Coastal Resources Management Office began a collaborative partnership with the Division of Environmental Quality, Department of Public Works, Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Northern Marianas College, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, landowners, volunteer groups, residents, divers, and beach users. Through this partnership, revegetation efforts were implemented to curb the upland erosion, and another planting event is in the works.

While, the engineering design for the paving, drainage, and beach access improvements on Laulau bay drive is complete, the very big obstacle here is the $1.6 million (approximately) to fund the necessary improvements to control the sedimentation.

Beach users, meanwhile, can still make a difference by driving on access roads only and not on the beach. Users can also stop littering and dispose of trash in proper containers and better yet, recycle those cans, bottles and plastic items.

Remember, every act counts. Protect our coral reefs. ***(CoCo)***

CNMI Organization for Conservation Outreach

Fight global warming: CHANGE YOUR BULB

How many lightbulbs does it take to save $10 billion?

a. one
b. one in each home
c. 25 million
d. 10 billion

The answer is b.

Nearly 20 percent of our home's electricity use goes to lighting. Choosing energy-efficient lighting is an easy way to start using energy wisely. Switch out a single light bulb or fixture in your home to a light that's earned the government's Energy Star for energy efficiency.

Most electricity in the United States is generated by burning fossil fuels such as coal or oil, which release greenhouse gases into our air. So, when you use less energy, you help prevent global climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. ***(CoCo)***

Life & Style

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Light floods an exhibit in Luxembourg's glass-shelled Museum of Modern Art, designed by I.M. Pei.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

The Dancing Pilgrims Procession is part of the Whit Tuesday festival in Echternach, an observance following Pentecost Sunday, linked to St. Willibrord. The groups of dancers proceed under banners identifying their home parishes.

Crossroad of cultures

By SUSAN SPANO
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

When I set out to visit the smallest countries in Europe, I put Luxembourg at the top of the list.

Then I opened my atlas and found that Luxembourg comes in sixth, behind Andorra, on a list of continental Europe's dinkiest nations. It is almost as big as Rhode Island, with an area of 998 square miles and nearly half a million people.

You can drive across the grand duchy in 30 minutes. It looks so much like neighboring Germany, France and Belgium that you would miss it if you didn't know it was there.

But I was watching for Luxembourg when I crossed into it in the summer, intending to get to know another little, lost European country right out of the Brothers Grimm. Apparently I was in denial that it joined modern Europe long ago.

I got caught in traffic near the city of Luxembourg, home to the government of the grand duchy, museums, historic sites, international corporations, branches of the European Union and 180 banks. I tried to circumvent the capital on back roads, but finally admitted I was lost.

It's a good thing to get lost on winding country roads north of the capital. Most of them lead into the deep, dark forest of the Ardennes. Stippled by mountains and deeply creased by the Sure, Alzette and Woltz rivers, the region was deemed impenetrable by medieval armies and desperately contested in World War II's Battle of the Bulge. Now the Ardennes is a fine place for walking, biking and driving.

Eventually I arrived in Gaichel, about 50 yards from the Belgian border. The village has an inn, gas station and nine-hole golf course that straddles an international border, meaning golfers can drive in one country and putt in another.

The venerable old inn, which occupies two buildings on a crossroads, was founded in 1853 and thereafter maintained by six generations of women (with help from their husbands).

Soon after I checked in, I met Celine Guillou, whose grandfather Rene Jacquemin, a Dijon, France-trained chef, won the kitchen's first Michelin star in 1968. Her grandmother Marie Therese lived at La Gaichel as a little girl during World War II when the Germans occupied it.

Since then, the inn has grown and prospered. Besides the elegant 12-room Hotel-Restaurant La Gaichel, it includes the more modest but thoroughly charming, 17-room Auberge de la Gaichel, with its own bistro. I dined on the terrace, choosing a Pinot Blanc from eastern Luxembourg to accompany an entree of roasted chicken in a nest of spring vegetables.

The next morning I took a bicycle from the inn to the pretty town of Eischen, just over the hill, then found a one-lane road bordered by pastures leading to the ruins of the 13th-century Cistercian Abbey of Clairefontaine. The abbey's still-standing neo-Romanesque chapel has a potent reminder of the Middle Ages in the tomb of Countess Ermesinde, who ruled the region from 1226 to 1247.

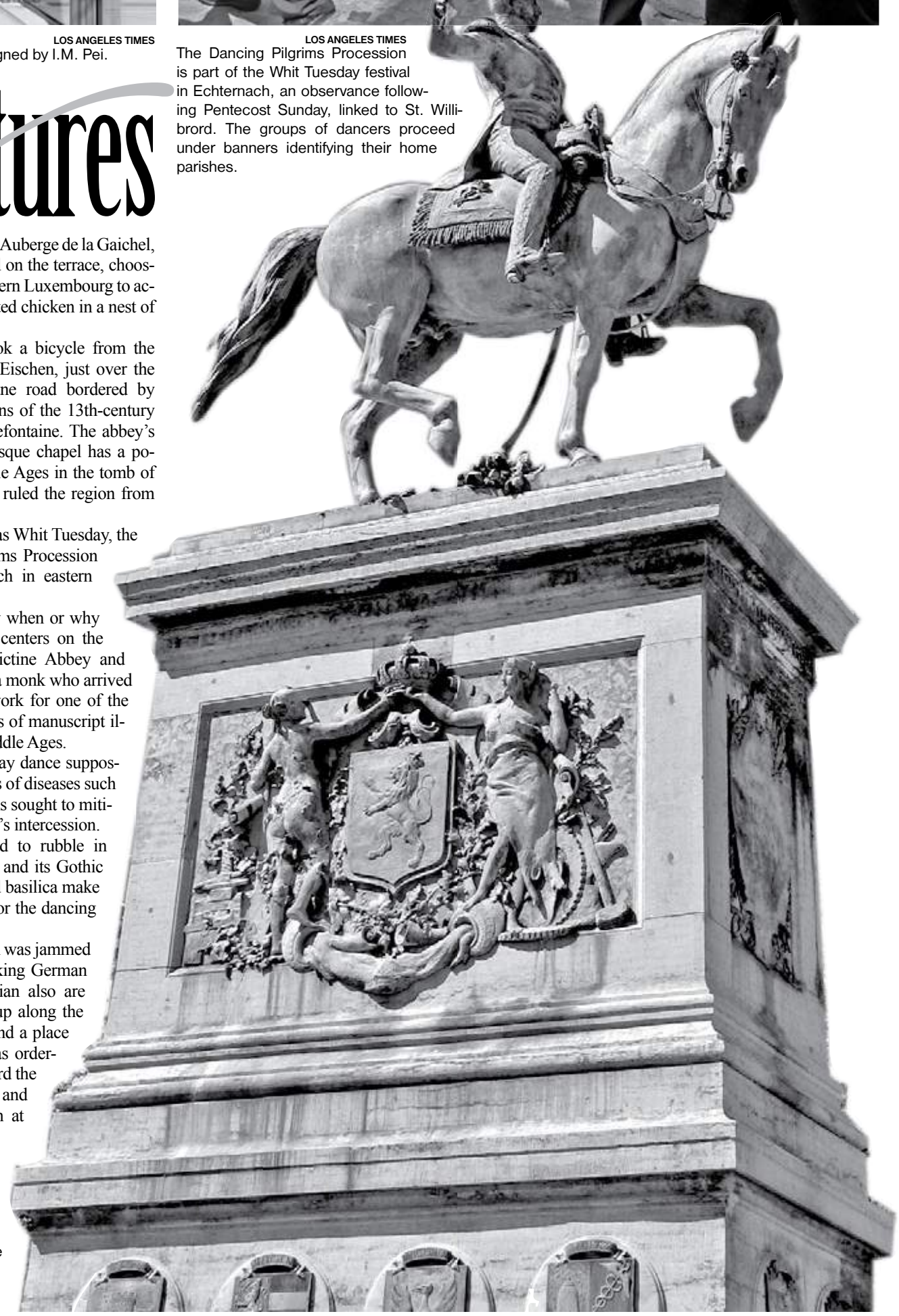
By a stroke of luck, it was Whit Tuesday, the day of the Dancing Pilgrims Procession in the town on Echternach in eastern Luxembourg.

No one knows precisely when or why the festival began, but it centers on the town's magisterial Benedictine Abbey and Basilica of St. Willibrord, a monk who arrived in 698 to lay the groundwork for one of the most accomplished schools of manuscript illumination in the early Middle Ages.

The strange Whit Tuesday dance supposedly imitates the symptoms of diseases such as epilepsy that the pilgrims sought to mitigate through St. Willibrord's intercession.

Echternach was reduced to rubble in the war but it was rebuilt, and its Gothic marketplace, town hall and basilica make an outstanding backdrop for the dancing procession.

When I arrived, the town was jammed with tourists, mostly speaking German (French and Luxembourgian also are official languages), lined up along the winding main street. I found a place at a sidewalk cafe and was ordering an espresso when I heard the boom of an oompah band and caught sight of clergymen at the head of the procession.



The equestrian statue of William II, once King of the Netherlands and the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, in Luxembourg City's Place Guillaume.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Ranks of dancers—all male—followed under banners identifying their parishes. One group of pilgrims stopped in front of my table and began to hop from one foot to the other, followed by another group and then another, all performing their strange quadrille with dignity and deliberation.

When the last ranks finally reached the square in front of the church, they filed in for Mass and I had lunch, imagining the dancing pilgrims with briefcases, on their way to work at a bank the next morning.

That afternoon I drove through the countryside of northern Luxembourg, keeping a loose grip on my map because I no longer thought it productive to try to avoid getting lost. Pristine villages and handsome houses with manicured lawns suggest money, and statistics bear it out. Luxembourg has the world's highest per capita gross domestic product.

But a beautifully manicured lawn at the Luxembourg American Cemetery, east of the capital, in the town of Hamm, tells a different story about a war-ravaged country and the American fighting men who liberated it from German occupation during World War II. More than 5,000 U.S. soldiers lie beneath simple white crosses, most of them victims of the Battle of the Bulge.

It was Hitler's last gasp, beginning Dec. 16, 1944, six months after D-day, with a massive, surprise German offensive into eastern Belgium and Luxembourg. Many American troops were stationed there along a seemingly quiet front, which had a southern terminus at Echternach.

As German soldiers poured into the Ardennes, the Allied Command called up the 3rd Army. It was headed by Maj. Gen. George Patton, who made his place in military history during the Battle of the Bulge. He died in a car crash just after the war and was buried at the Luxembourg American Cemetery.

Unlike other mini-states in Europe, tucked in out-of-the-way mountain places, Luxembourg is in the heart of Northern Europe, making it ever a passageway and prize for foreign armies.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

The Grand Ducal Palace of Luxembourg, a country about the size of Rhode Island at 998 square miles, is in the historic center of Luxembourg City.

Source: ESRI

Leslie Carlson Los Angeles Times

Its capital city, on a plateau deeply cut by the Alzette and Petrusse rivers, was a natural bastion even before a long line of conquerors added three rings of walls, 24 forts and 14 miles of tunnels.

This stout ensemble of fortifications, along with the old town it protected, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the city of Luxembourg's chief attraction. It is accessible along steep walkways leading to a district below the promontory known as the Grund.

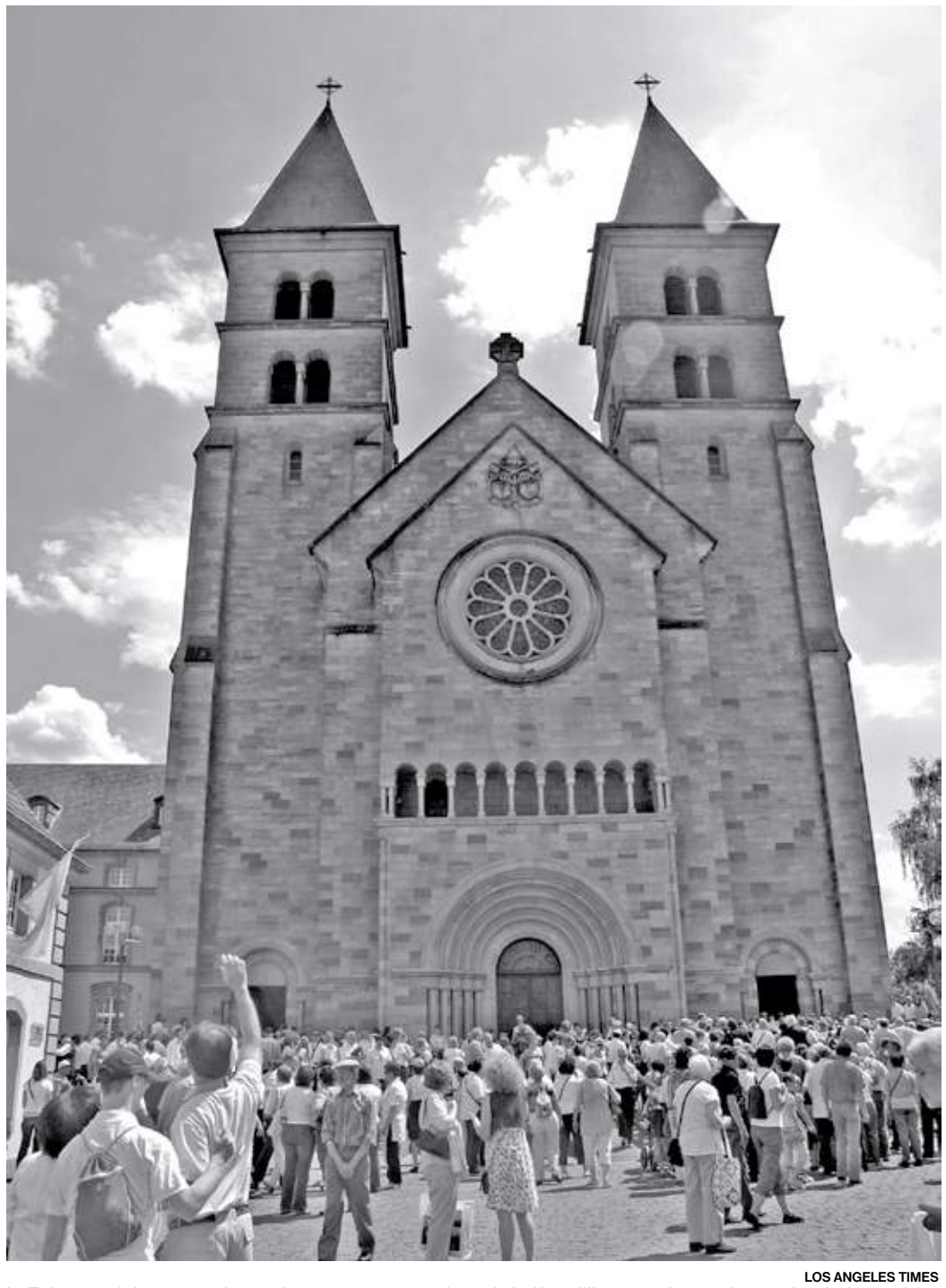
The next day, in town, I inspected the fortifications, sat with a coffee in the leafy Place d'Armes, watched a solitary, uniformed guard pace in front of the Grand Ducal Palace, the official home of Luxembourg's head of state and constitutional monarch, Grand Duke Henri, and toured the excellent Luxembourg City History Museum, where I learned about Luxembourgian sports stars Johny Grun, a weightlifter who, in his prime around 1900, could lift two horses and their riders on a platform above his head; and cyclist Charly Gaul, called the "Angel of the Mountains," who won the 1958 Tour de France.

Then I crossed the Alzette River valley to the enclave of conference centers and corporate offices atop the Kirchberg-Plateau, also home to Luxembourg's I.M. Pei-designed Museum of Modern Art. The beautiful building, all space and light, showcases some selections from its own collection but is chiefly devoted to top-flight temporary exhibitions.

The museum's cafe, a whimsically decorated work of art itself with refectory tables under a pergola, was a good stop for a salad at lunch, followed by a stroll across the nearby remains of a set of French-built fortifications.

On my way back to La Gaichel, I got lost again, which is how I found a partly restored 11th-century castle in the village of Useldange. I climbed into its keep to get a closer look at its two towers, then sat contentedly by the nearby Attert River.

The grand duchy may be thoroughly integrated into modern Europe. But, I thought, you don't have to scratch the surface too deeply to find Countess Ermesinde, St. Willibrord and the Middle Ages.



LOS ANGELES TIMES

In Echternach in eastern Luxembourg, a country of nearly half a million people, tourists gather in front of the Basilica of St. Willibrord, an imposing, Gothic structure.

Blind activists plan protest of movie 'Blindness'

BALTIMORE (AP)—Blind people quarantined in a mental asylum, attacking each other, soiling themselves, trading sex for food. For Marc Maurer, who's blind, such a scenario—as shown in the movie "Blindness"—is not a clever allegory for a breakdown in society.

Instead, it's an offensive and chilling depiction that Maurer fears could undermine efforts to integrate blind people into the mainstream.

"The movie portrays blind people as monsters, and I believe it to be a lie," said Maurer, president of the Baltimore-based National Federation of the Blind. "Blindness doesn't turn decent people into monsters."

The organization plans to protest the movie, released by Miramax Films, at 75 theaters around the country when it's released Friday. Blind people and their allies will hand out fliers and carry signs. Among the slogans: "I'm not an actor. But I play a blind person in real life."

AP

In this image released by Miramax Pictures, Julianne Moore, right, and Mark Ruffalo are shown in a scene from "Blindness."

The movie reinforces inaccurate stereotypes, including that the blind cannot care for themselves and are perpetually disoriented, according to the NFB.

"We face a 70 percent unemployment rate and other social problems because people don't think we can do anything, and this movie is not going to help—at all," said Christopher Danielsen, a spokesman for the organization.

"Blindness" director Fernando Meirelles, an Academy Award nominee for "City of God," was shooting on location Thursday and unavailable for comment, according to Miramax. The studio released a statement that read, in part, "We are saddened to learn that the National Federation of the Blind plans to protest the film `Blindness.'"

The NFB began planning the protests after seven staffers, including Danielsen, attended a screening of the movie in Baltimore last week. The group included three sighted employees.

"Everybody was offended," Danielsen said.

Based on the 1995 novel by Nobel Prize winner Jose Saramago, "Blindness" imagines a mysterious epidemic that causes people to see nothing but fuzzy white light—resulting in a collapse of the social order in an unnamed city. Julianne Moore stars as the wife of an eye doctor (Mark Ruffalo) who loses his sight; she feigns blindness to stay with her husband and eventually leads a revolt of the quarantined patients.

The book was praised for its use of blindness as a metaphor for the lack of clear communication and respect for human dignity in modern society.

Miramax said in its statement that Meirelles had "worked diligently to preserve the intent and resonance of the acclaimed book," which it described as "a courageous parable about the triumph of the human spirit when civilization breaks down."

Maurer will have none of it.

"I think that failing to understand each other is a significant problem," he said. "I think that portraying it as associated with blindness is just incorrect."

The protest will include pickets at theaters in at least 21 states, some with dozens of participants, timed to coincide with evening showtimes. Maurer said it would be the largest protest in the 68-year history of the NFB, which has 50,000 members and works to improve blind people's lives through advocacy, education and other ways.

The film was the opening-night entry at the Cannes Film Festival, where many critics were unimpressed.

After Cannes, Meirelles retooled the film, removing a voice-over that some critics felt spelled out its themes too explicitly.

Meirelles told The Associated Press at Cannes that the film draws parallels to such disasters as Hurricane Katrina, the global food shortage and the cyclone in Myanmar.

"There are different kinds of blindness. There's 2 billion people that are starving in the world," Meirelles said. "This is happening. It doesn't need a catastrophe. It's happening, and because there isn't an event like Katrina, we don't see."

Nobel literature head: US too insular to compete

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP)—Bad news for American writers hoping for a Nobel Prize next week: the top member of the award jury believes the United States is too insular and ignorant to compete with Europe when it comes to great writing.

Counters the head of the U.S. National Book Foundation: "Put him in touch with me, and I'll send him a reading list."

As the Swedish Academy enters final deliberations for this year's award, permanent secretary Horace Engdahl said it's no coincidence that most winners are European.

"Of course there is powerful literature in all big cultures, but you can't get away from the fact that Europe still is the center of the literary world ... not the United States," he told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview Tuesday.

He said the 16-member award jury has not selected this year's winner, and dropped no hints about who was on the short list. Americans Philip Roth and Joyce Carol Oates usually figure in speculation, but Engdahl wouldn't comment on any names.

Speaking generally about American literature, however, he said U.S. writers are "too sensitive to trends in their own mass culture," dragging down the quality of their work.

"The U.S. is too isolated, too insular. They don't translate enough and don't really participate in the big dialogue of literature," Engdahl said. "That ignorance is restraining."

His comments were met with fierce reactions from literary officials across the Atlantic.

"You would think that the permanent secretary of an academy that pretends to wisdom but has historically overlooked Proust, Joyce, and Nabokov, to name just a few non-Nobelists, would spare us the categorical lectures," said David Remnick, editor of The New Yorker.

"And if he looked harder at the American scene that he dwells on, he would see the vitality in the generation of Roth, Updike, and DeLillo, as well as in many younger writers, some of them sons and daughters of immigrants writing in their adopted English. None of these poor souls, old or young, seem ravaged by the horrors of Coca-Cola."

Harold Augenbraum, executive director of the foundation which administers the National Book Awards, said he wanted to send Engdahl a reading list of U.S. literature.

"Such a comment makes me think that Mr. Engdahl has read little of American literature outside the mainstream and has a very narrow view of what constitutes literature in this age," he said.

"In the first place, one way the United States has embraced the concept of world culture is through immigration. Each generation, beginning in the late 19th century, has recreated the idea of American literature."

He added that this is something the English and French are discovering as immigrant groups begin to take their place in those traditions.

The most recent American to win the award was Toni Morrison in 1993. Other American winners include Saul Bellow, John Steinbeck and Ernest Hemingway.

As permanent secretary, Engdahl is a voting member of and spokesman for the secretive panel that selects the winners of what many consider the most prestigious award in literature.

The academy often picks obscure writers and hardly ever selects best-selling authors. It regularly faces accusations of snobbery, political bias and even poor taste.

Since Japanese writer Kenzaburo Oe won the award in 1994, the selections have had a distinct European flavor. Nine of the subsequent laureates were Europeans, including last year's winner, Doris Lessing of Britain. Of the other four, one was from Turkey and the others from South Africa, China and Trinidad. All had strong ties to Europe.

Engdahl said Europe draws literary exiles because it "respects the independence of literature" and can serve as a safe haven. "Very many authors who have their roots in other countries work in Europe, because it is only here where you can be left alone and write, without being beaten to death," he said. "It is dangerous to be an author in big parts of Asia and Africa."

Kwame Anthony Appiah, a leading African scholar and a professor of philosophy at Princeton University, said that there has been a long history of American writers being influenced by authors elsewhere and in turn having an impact overseas, including in Europe.

"Is America really a diminished presence in the literary world? That's not the sense you get looking at European book stores. I'm always amazed how many of the books in German or Italian bookstores are translations from American English," Appiah said.

"The big dialogue of literature isn't just going on in Paris and Frankfurt ... I assume even Engdahl agrees it is not centered on Stockholm," he said.

The Nobel Prize announcements start next week with the medicine award on Monday, followed by physics, chemistry, peace and economics. Next Thursday is a possible date for the literature prize, but the Swedish Academy by tradition only gives the date two days before.

Osbourne has a rooting interest in talent finale

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Sharon Osbourne isn't shy about her favorites on Wednesday's "America's Got Talent" finale. "I'm really rooting for Nuttin But Stringz, for Eli and for Neal," said Osbourne, a judge on the NBC talent contest.

Nuttin But Stringz is the violin duo of Damien and Tourie Escobar, brothers from New York; Eli Mattson is a pianist and singer, born in Duluth, Minn., and raised in Wisconsin; opera singer Neal E. Boyd is an insurance salesman from Sikeston, Mo.

Also competing: singer Donald Braswell of Boerne, Texas, whose focus is musical theater, and soul singer Queen Emily from Stockton, Calif.

"You've got a wide variety of talent and they're all great at what they do," Osbourne said of the finalists.

AP

In this image released by NBC, Nuttin But Stringz, the violin duo of Damien Escobar, left, and Tourie Escobar, brothers from the Queens borough of New York, perform on an episode of the NBC talent competition, "America's Got Talent," on Sept. 24, 2008 in Studio City, Calif. The winner of the competition will determined during the finale on Wednesday, Oct. 1.

But she sounds especially taken with Nuttin But Stringz, noting that the brothers write their unique material.

"How many times do you see classical music together with rock and hip-hop?" she said. An album from them "would be something different out there in the marketplace."

Osbourne is planning something different herself with her next TV project, a variety series for Fox with the working title "The Osbournes: Loud and Dangerous." It's tentatively set to debut with a Christmas special.

The show features Sharon and rocker spouse Ozzy with children Jack and Kelly, familiar to audiences from their MTV reality series "The Osbournes."

"It's really like a house party," Osbourne said of the upcoming series. "We're going to do comedy sketches, the four of us, and there's going to be music and pranks."

The goal is to fill the studio audience with families, especially those willing to reveal embarrassing episodes that happened to their relations.

But, she said, "We're not here to humiliate people. This is about entertaining people."

Janet Jackson released from hospital

AP

In this Sept. 17, 2008 file photo, singer Janet Jackson performs during her concert in Los Angeles. Jackson has been hospitalized after falling ill shortly before a concert performance, according to her representative.

NEW YORK (AP)—Janet Jackson was released from a Montreal hospital just two hours after she arrived, a spokeswoman for the facility said Tuesday, but it was still not clear why she was admitted.

The 42-year-old singer became "suddenly ill" and was taken to Royal Victoria Hospital on Monday night shortly before her scheduled concert in Montreal, which was canceled, according to a statement released by W&W Public Relations.

Jackson was at Royal Victoria but was released two hours later, said Rebecca Burns, representative for McGill University Health Centre, which runs the hospital. Representaives for Jackson would not elaborate on her condition Tuesday, simply saying that she was ill and was "recuperating."

Meanwhile, Jackson's shows in Boston and Philadelphia on Wednesday and Thursday were postponed and she was due to resume her tour in Greensboro, N.C. on Saturday. There was no information on when those shows would be rescheduled.

Jackson, who is on her first North American tour in seven years, dropped out of her scheduled "Saturday Night Live" performance in March because she had the flu, and her publicist said at the time that she went to the hospital for treatment but was not admitted.

Annual Woodstock Film Festival kicks off this week

WOODSTOCK, N.Y. (AP)—The ninth annual Woodstock Film Festival this week will feature appearances by filmmaker Kevin Smith, '60s troubadour Donovan and more than 120 films.

The festival runs Wednesday through Sunday at venues in Woodstock and nearby Kingston, Rosendale and Rhinebeck. Honorary awards will be presented to Smith, cinematographer Haskell Wexler and veteran writer-producer James Schamus, chief executive officer of Focus Features.

Festival director Meira Blaustein said 124 films will be screened this year, about half of them full-length features and documentaries. She said participants will be coming to this famous artists' colony north of New York City from all over the world.

"This area is going to be buzzing with filmmakers," she said.

Smith's new movie, "Zack and Miri Make a Porno," will be featured on closing night. Opening night will feature "Pride and Glory," "Happy-Go-Lucky" and "Flash of Genius."

In a nod to Woodstock's history and the eponymous 1969 concert, the festival routinely features music along with the movies. Donovan, best known for '60s standards like "Mellow Yellow," will perform and appear on a panel. Bela Fleck will perform in an opening-night concert with Abigail Washburn and The Sparrow Quartet.

AP

In this Sept. 8, 2008 file photo, director Kevin Smith from the film "Zack and Miri Make a Porno" poses for a portrait during the International Film Festival in Toronto.

AP

In these file photos, Bruce Springsteen, left, is shown in New York on Sept. 28, 2007 and Billy Joel is shown in this Feb. 24, 2008 file photo in West Hollywood, Calif.

Springsteen, Joel team up for Obama

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rock stars Bruce Springsteen and Billy Joel are teaming up for their first joint concert to benefit Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama.

Obama plans to attend the concert at the Hammerstein Ballroom in New York City on Oct. 16, the day after Obama's final debate with Republican John McCain at Hofstra University, located several miles outside the city in Hempstead, N.Y.

Seeing the two superstars together won't come cheap. Tickets start at $500 and range up to $10,000.

The event was first reported by the Huffington Post Web site and confirmed by an Obama aide.

Springsteen also planned to perform Saturday at a Philadelphia rally to boost the Obama campaign's voter registration drive. Polls show a close race between Obama and McCain in Pennsylvania, a state John Kerry won in 2004.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Beenie Man cleared of tax evasion in Jamaica

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)—A Jamaican judge has cleared Grammy-winning musician Beenie Man of tax-evasion charges, saying the government never informed him of his legal rights. Jamaican authorities have said the singer and rapper owed nearly US$1 million in overdue taxes. But Judge Owen Parkin threw out the case Tuesday, ruling evidence showed the entertainer was not informed of his rights when auditors issued their assessment last year. The singer's real name is Anthony Moses Davis. The Kingston native has been one of the biggest names in dancehall music for a decade. In 2001, he won a Grammy for his album "Art and Life."

Disney's 'The Lion King' set to roar in Sin City

LAS VEGAS (AP)—It's Simba's turn to roar on the Strip. Disney's "The Lion King" has been picked to replace "Mamma Mia!" at the Mandalay Bay hotel-casino, where it will take over for the musical, part of a wave of Broadway hits to migrate to the desert. Disney's stage version of the animated hit is the company's first show to set up residence in Sin City. Versions of the musical also are playing in six other cities as resident shows. "Mamma Mia!" closes Jan. 4 after 2,300 performances. The show is based on the hits of 1970s supergroup ABBA and premiered in Las Vegas in 2003.

Joel to aid NY clammer's kin with funeral costs

BAYVILLE, N.Y. (AP)—Billy Joel, who has championed the cause of Long Island, New York, fishermen in songs like "The Downeaster Alexa," is helping with the funeral expenses for a clam-digger whose body was found not far from the singer's mansion. The body of Edwin Flores was found floating off a Long Island Sound beach in Lattingtown on Monday, six days after he was reported missing. The Nassau County medical examiner has confirmed the man's identity and says an autopsy will be performed to determine the cause of death. Joel, who has a house in nearby Centre Island, says he has made a donation to the North Oyster Bay Baymen's Association to help Flores' family with funeral and other expenses. He has declined to say how much he donated.

Ifill still on for debate despite breaking ankle

NEW YORK (AP)—Gwen Ifill has a broken ankle, but she'll still serve as the upcoming vice presidential debate's moderator. The veteran PBS newswoman tripped in her Washington area home while walking downstairs Monday, carrying material she was using to prep for the debate between Joe Biden and Sarah Palin. Despite the pain, doctors have given her the OK to travel to St. Louis, where the vice presidential debate is scheduled for Thursday. "Another crazy twist in a crazy week," Ifill said, confirming her injury in an e-mail. Ifill is moderator of PBS' "Washington Week" and senior correspondent on "The NewsHour."

Winfrey's mom countersues store for its $156K bill

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Oprah Winfrey's mother says she shouldn't have to pay a nearly $156,000 debt to a high-end fashion store because store officials shouldn't have extended credit to her. Valentina Inc. alleges that Vernita Lee of Milwaukee racked up $155,547 in purchases and interest as of July 1. The company sued, saying Lee fell behind in minimum monthly payments of $2,000. Lee filed a counterclaim Friday contending that Valentina took advantage of her "lack of knowledge, ability, and-or capacity" when creating her credit account. Court papers say Lee resolved a 2002 case with the company over a $175,000 bill. The resolution prohibited Valentina from extending further credit to her.

Woman drowns in sorrow of man's drinking binges

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My ex and I have been dating since our divorce in 2000, trying to put things back together. But every six months or so, he comes to my house drunk and raises Cain in front of the kids.

He never says he's sorry for anything he does or says, and it causes fights that could be avoided if he just would not drink. If he could only see how it makes him act! He does not drink all the time. But when he does, he passes out on my couch.

I have told him time and time again not to come to the house if he has been drinking. If I try to make him leave, he does more in front of the kids, and he has been known to hit. How can I make it clear to him I have had enough? I love him, but I'm very tired of this every-six-months thing. I have called the law before. That just makes matters worse.

Should I get away from him altogether? I want my family back together so badly. I have prayed about this for a long time. I have tried talking to him—nothing works. Please give me some advice.

"TINA" IN TRINITY, ALA.

DEAR "TINA": Perhaps it's time to face the fact that as much as your ex-husband says he loves you and the children, he loves his bottle more. You divorced him for a reason, and he isn't going to change. If he shows up at your house after he has been drinking, do not open the door. If he creates a disturbance, call the police and let them handle him.

When a parent acts out the way your husband does when he gets loaded, it damages the children who are exposed to it. They never know when the father they love—and presumably trust—will turn into a monster, and they are always waiting for the other shoe to drop. Even worse, they may grow up thinking his behavior is normal or acceptable and marry someone just like Daddy.

Much as you might like, you cannot rescue your ex-husband from his alcohol addiction. Some literature that might give you insight is a booklet published by Al-Anon titled, "Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2009." It is available online in English, Spanish and French, and can be downloaded at www.Al-AnonFamilyGroups.net. For a free printed copy, e-mail wso(at)al-anon.org, fax (757) 563-1655, or write: Al-Anon Family Groups, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My 35-year-old sister is soon to be married for the first time and has planned an elaborate affair. She has many friends, business associates and family members to invite. Because of the expense, she is not inviting the "younger" generation.

When I called to respond to her invitation, I explained that I will be attending, but my wife—due to health issues—will not be able to come. I told her I would like to substitute our only teenage daughter. My sister's response? She told me she has so many people to invite that she has a waiting list, and she'll substitute someone from that list!

This seems rude to me. Have you ever heard of a waiting list?

MIFFED IN SAN JOSE

DEAR MIFFED: As a matter of fact, I have. It's sometimes called a "B" list. When a wedding invitation is issued, the rules of etiquette dictate that only those people whose names are on the invitation are invited. While I understand your desire to take your daughter, you committed a breach of etiquette in asking to make a substitution. Because your sister had decided not to include the younger generation, your daughter's presence could cause problems for her with other members of the family.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

I GUESS WE SHOULD GO HOME TO EARTH.
YEAH, WE MAY NOT BE WELCOME HERE.
WE OUGHT TO FIX UP OUR OWN PLANET BEFORE WE GO MESSING AROUND WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S PLANETS.
AFTER ALL, THERE'S ONLY ONE EARTH, AND IT'S GOT TO LAST US A WHILE.
© 1988 Universal Press Syndicate
10/2
WE ALSO SHOULD GO HOME BECAUSE WE'RE CLEAN OUT OF TUNA.
I HOPE MOM AND DAD DIDN'T RENT OUT MY ROOM.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

REMEMBER MY OLD GIRLFRIEND RHONDA?
NOPE
JIM DAVIS 10-2
www.garfield.com
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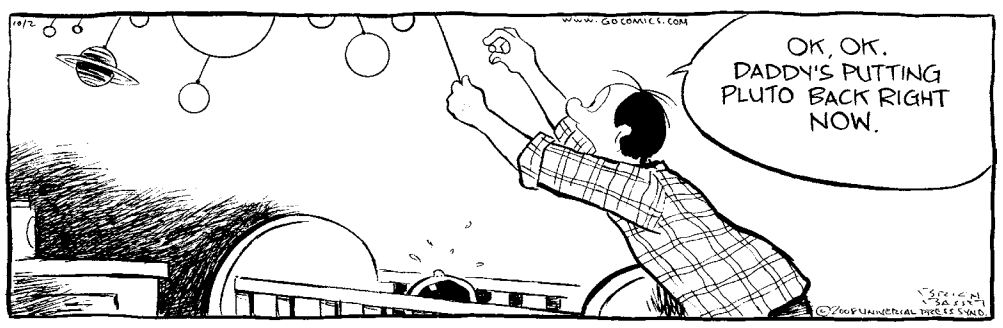
SHE WAS ALL KINDA STOOPED OVER?...
NOPE
-AND HAD THE GIANT SLOPING FOREHEAD, CRO-MAGNON BROW, AND BAD TEETH?
OH, YEAH. THE HAND MODEL
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I'M A CAT PERSON. I CAN'T STAND DOGS.
Glenn McCoy/dist. by Universal Press Syndicate
2008
OH, I AGREE! DOGS ARE THE WORST! THEY'RE SO...
RIGHT BEHIND YOU...
BUSTED!
10/2

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

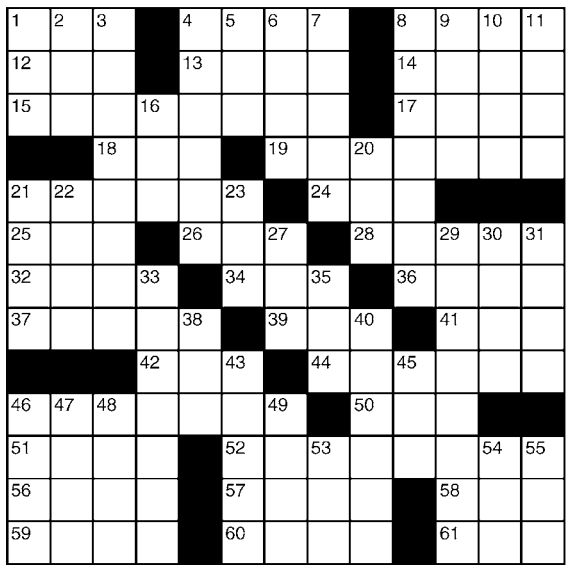
ACROSS
1 "Angela's Ashes" sequel
4 Spencer of "The Insider"
8 Junk e-mail
12 Commotion
13 Rainbow
14 Radius neighbor
15 Video-game controller
17 Night light?
18 Perch
19 Scopolamine source
21 Put one over on
24 Coloring agent
25 Cassowary look-alike
26 Wardrobe malfunction
28 Plotters' group
32 Rocking Jagger
34 Awkward guy
36 Oliver Twist's request
37 Trusty horse
39 "— the Dog"
41 Favorable vote
42 Take to court
44 Powerful starlike object
46 Subterfuge
50 Biz letterhead abbr.
51 Perjurer
52 Buzz Lightyear's movie
56 Land measure
57 Curved molding
58 Guitar's kin
59 Holler
60 Defeat
61 Heavy weight

DOWN
1 — Mahal
2 Altar affirmative
3 Chinese food condiment
4 Type of bug?
5 Jackie's second hubby
6 Affluent
7 Requested
8 Ray from Ra?
9 "Not guilty," e.g.
10 Uncredited in "Bartlett's"
11 Lion's pride
16 Pack quantity
20 Big Apple letters
21 Fixes a skirt
22 Leave out
23 God, in Italian
27 Manhandle
29 Merit-badge earner
30 Vicinity
31 Mad Shakespearean king
33 Variety of falcon
35 Web site info format
38 Payable
40 Masks
43 Praise to the skies
45 Pismire
46 Stage show
47 Houston university
48 Count counterpart
49 African republic
53 "Certainly"
54 Old movie-house letters
55 Longing

Solution time: 25 mins.

B	O	T		N	A	P	S		O	B	E	Y
O	U	R		O	P	A	L		H	O	M	E
A	C	E		T	E	N	A	C	I	O	U	S
S	H	E	A	F			W	O	O			
			R	A	M	P		D	A	M	E	S
G	R	A	C	I	O	U	S		N	I	C	K
E	E	L		R	O	L	E	S		S	R	I
M	A	G	I		S	P	A	C	I	O	U	S
S	L	A	N	T		S	T	I	R			
			S	I	D			S	K	U	N	K
V	O	R	A	C	I	O	U	S		P	I	N
O	V	E	N		S	O	S	O		O	N	E
W	A	V	E		C	H	A	R		N	E	W

Yesterday's answer 10-2



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ayumi Hamasaki, 30; Kelly Ripa, 38; Lorraine Bracco, 54; Sting, 57

Happy Birthday: Step into the limelight and be yourself and you will find out you have just as much going as the next guy. It's about balance and belief in your own abilities. Control your actions and keep things simple. You are up for a little glory, so don't sabotage what you have worked so hard to build because you fear success or failure. Your numbers are 10, 13, 15, 28, 37, 38, 45

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't sit back contemplating all the things you want to do—get started. Once you do, your Aries enthusiasm will be contagious and your friends, family and peers will jump in to help you move to completion. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): A relationship with someone important to you is in need of tender, loving care. Nurture what means the most to you in life. Love makes everything you accomplish that much more worthwhile. Plan a romantic adventure. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Straightforward talks will be your best alternative if someone is playing mind games with you. Pin down whoever is meddling or taking sides, causing confusion among friends and family. Take control, monitor the situation and be the one who listens. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Follow your own intuition if someone tries to manipulate the situation or maneuver you in a direction you aren't sure you want to go. Love is on the rise and emotional matters can be cleared up with a little honesty. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Pamper yourself and your loved ones. Make changes at home that will add to your comfort and entertainment. You can be the hero today with a few moves and compliments that make everyone feel good. Have family talks and set new rules. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Love is in the stars and the time to make contact with someone who interests you or to enhance the relationship you are already in, is now. A vacation or even a special day at home will work wonders for your relationship. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Ask questions and don't take anything for granted. Deception is apparent, so don't believe secondhand information. Be stern but understanding if you want to get to the bottom of things. Career changes look promising. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Emotional matters will be high on your list today. Don't avoid a confrontation that could very well straighten out long-standing problems. Once you understand the situation, your empathy will lead to a suitable solution. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Sudden changes will catch you off-guard. If you want to look good, you had better keep things straight and refrain from gossip. It could backfire, making you look bad. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Volunteering is a wonderful thing but when people start putting demands on you, it's time to back away. Concentrate on paying jobs. A trip will be a waste of time and money. Communicate by phone or Internet. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Enjoy your old friends and explore your past and someone you used to enjoy spending a lot of time with will come back into your life. Gifts and a proposal that will help you get ahead professionally are heading your way. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Keep things straight or you will trip over your own feet when someone grills you about your intentions. Don't slant information with your own opinions. Say nothing if you have nothing nice to say. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are in tune with everything going on around you. You are intelligent and a gifted speaker who can grab attention with your charm and grace. You are outgoing and love to do things in a big way.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

9		4				2		
				5				
1			3	9	2			8
		9				5		
	4	5		7		6	2	
		2				1		
8			7	6	9			1
				4				
		7				9		2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 10/02

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	6	5	7	4	8	2	3	9
3	9	2	1	5	6	7	4	8
7	8	4	3	2	9	1	6	5
8	5	6	9	1	7	3	2	4
2	1	7	4	3	5	8	9	6
4	3	9	6	8	2	5	1	7
5	4	1	8	6	3	9	7	2
9	2	3	5	7	4	6	8	1
6	7	8	2	9	1	4	5	3

Difficulty Level ★★★ 10/01

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

HOLLYWOOD MARRIAGES — Solution: 9 letters

A	E	V	E	N	T	T	N	E	L	U	B	R	U	T
N	N	M	S	C	H	E	D	U	L	E	S	M	N	E
N	T	N	O	O	S	A	(F)	(A)	(M)	(E)	D	O	X	M
U	E	Q	O	N	E	H	S	U	P	L	I	C	G	P
L	R	C	U	U	T	D	O	E	I	S	I	L	D	O
M	T	A	O	I	N	H	I	W	I	T	O	D	I	R
E	A	A	A	U	C	C	S	V	I	V	E	T	O	A
N	I	F	I	N	P	K	E	N	E	L	O	I	L	R
T	N	R	A	D	E	L	G	M	B	Z	M	M	B	Y
U	M	O	T	T	E	P	E	U	E	I	R	E	A	D
Y	E	M	N	T	E	M	O	S	D	N	E	R	T	H
X	N	U	E	Y	S	R	E	V	O	R	T	N	O	C
E	T	H	G	N	T	D	E	T	O	M	O	R	P	T
S	E	S	A	N	O	I	T	A	R	A	P	E	S	A
L	A	D	N	A	C	S	N	A	I	C	I	S	U	M

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Agent, Announcement, Annulment, Controversy, Couple, Entertainment, Event, Exciting, Fame, Fate, Humor, Love, Match, Media, Months, Movies, Musicians, Open, Promoted, Push, Quick, Read, Scandal, Schedules, Separation, Sexy, Show, Tabloid, Television, Temporary, Term, Time, Trends, Troubled, Turbulent, Unfaithful, Video, Wild

Yesterday's Answer: Languages

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Saipan Tribune

Name: Jeffrey P. Cabrera
Address: P.O. Box 501116, Saipan MP 96950
Phone: (670) 664-9059

Pro Se,

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

JEFFREY P. CABRERA Petitioner,	)	FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0443
vs.	)	SUMMONS
XIAQIN ZHOU CABRERA Respondent,	)	

TO: XIAQIN ZHOU CABRERA

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after service of the Summons upon you and deliver or mail a copy of your answer to JEFFREY P. CABRERA whose address is P.O. Box 501116, Saipan MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file an answer within this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 30th day of July, 2008.

/s/ Clerk of Court

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1996-1998 Nissan Sentras 4Dr
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- Candidate must be a self starter, qualified and able to assume the General Manager's position.
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- Candidate must have strong communication skills in English, both oral & written.
- Candidate must be in good health & willing to accept a minimum of 2 year contract.
- Candidate must be computer literate and proficient in Excel, Word, Outlook, etc.

DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

- Plans, develops and implements organization strategies and goals.
- Manages assets (inventory/receivables/cash) to assure best ROI to shareholders.
- Directs and coordinates promotion of products or services performed to develop new markets, increase share of market, and obtain competitive position in the industry.
- Analyzes division or department budget requests to identify areas in which changes can be made to improve operating profit.
- Confers with personnel and reviews activity, operating and sales reports to determine changes in programs or operations required.
- Directs division or department managers, supervisors operations and changes to be implemented.
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WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

DOCTOR

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Thome, Griffey carry White Sox to AL Central crown

CHICAGO (AP)—Thanks to Jim Thome's bat and Ken Griffey Jr.'s arm, the AL Central has a winner at last: the Chicago White Sox.

John Danks pitched eight innings of two-hit ball on short rest, Thome homered and Griffey threw out a runner at the plate with a tough tag by A.J. Pierzynski, helping Chicago beat the Minnesota Twins 1-0 in a 163rd-game tiebreaker for the division title Tuesday night.

The White Sox joined the crosstown Cubs in the postseason, the first time since 1906 that both Chicago teams made it. And just as the Cubs did when they clinched the NL Central crown, several White Sox players came back on the field after the final out and sprayed fans with champagne.

"We're so happy from our end that Sox fans get to enjoy this ride," Thome said.

Next up for the South Siders, a first-round matchup with the surprising Rays. Game 1 is Thursday at Tampa Bay, which won the AL East.

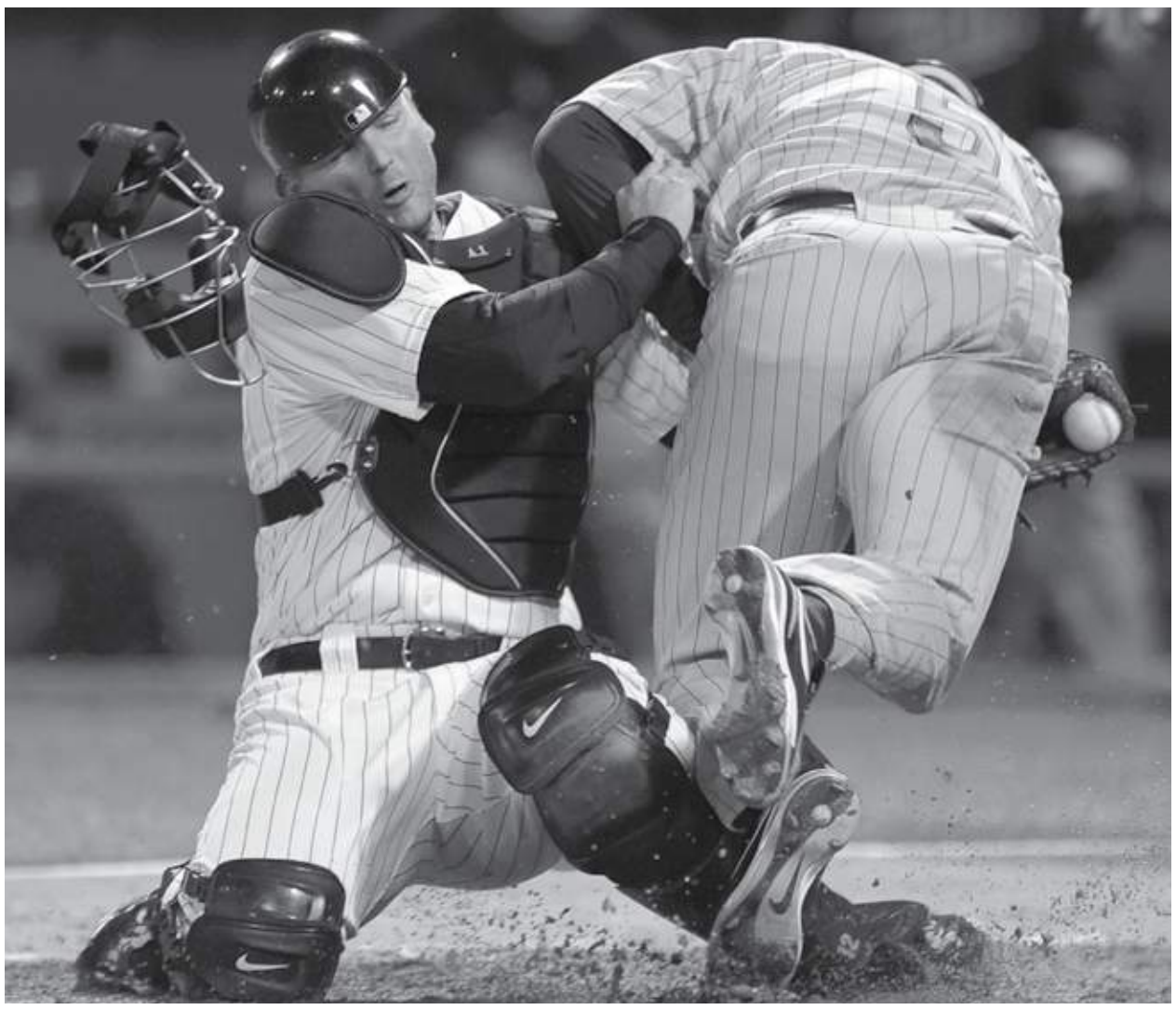
"Look at this," Thome said with the crowd roaring all around him. "This is what it's all about—October baseball."

The White Sox got a huge boost Tuesday from two of their oldest players: Thome and Griffey, both seeking their first World Series championship.

Thome's long drive on a 2-2 pitch from rookie Nick Blackburn cleared two rows of shrubs in center field, traveling an estimated 461 feet to snap a scoreless tie in the seventh. It was the 541st homer for Thome, who raised his right fist as he rounded first base. He hadn't been to the playoffs since 2001 with Cleveland.

Griffey, who came to the White Sox in a trade with the Reds so he could have a chance at playing in the postseason, cut down Michael Cuddyer with a nice throw from center in the fifth. Griffey, who like Thome is 38, will be making his first postseason appearance since 1997 with Seattle.

"He did a heck of a job," Thome said. "I'm so happy for him, too."



AP

Chicago White Sox catcher A.J. Pierzynski, left, tags out Minnesota Twins' Michael Cuddyer at home during the fifth inning of an American League Central Division tiebreaker baseball game Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008, in Chicago. Cuddyer tried to score from third on a fly out by Brendan Harris.

Bobby Jenks worked a perfect ninth for his 30th save in 34 chances. After replacing Griffey in center field, Brian Anderson ended it with a diving catch of Alexi Casilla's blooper.

Soon after it was over, Pierzynski, Danks and Nick Swisher grabbed a microphone on the field and addressed the delirious crowd.

Danks, pitching on three days' rest for the first time in his career and with just one win in his previous seven starts, held the Twins hitless through the first four innings on a 56-degree night. Cuddyer led off the fifth with a double and moved to third on Delmon Young's fly to center.

When Brendan Harris hit a fly to Griffey in shallow center, Cuddyer took off for the plate. He crashed into Pierzynski, who held onto the low, two-hop throw from Griffey while tagging Cuddyer for the out. Pierzynski then popped up and showed the ball as the crowd of 40,354—mostly dressed in black—roared.

Danks (12-9) delivered in the biggest came of his brief career. He won a duel with Blackburn (11-11), who retired 13 of 14 before Thome led off the seventh with his long homer.

The White Sox hosted the game because they won a coin flip earlier this month and what an advantage it was: Chicago went 8-2 against the Twins at U.S. Cellular Field this season and 1-8 at the Metrodome.

"That's a battle between friends," Chicago manager Ozzie Guillen said, referring to the rivalry. "We just got the last laugh."

It was the eighth one-game playoff in major league history and the first in the AL since 1995 when Seattle beat the California Angels 9-1 to win the AL West. Playing for the Mariners in that game was Griffey and Chicago bench coach Joey Cora.

A late-season slide by the White Sox began at the Metrodome last week. The White Sox entered a three-game series with a 2 1/2-game lead in the division but the Twins pulled off a sweep to take over first place.

Chicago came home and lost two more to the Indians but was able to stay close because the Twins dropped two in a row to the Royals at the Metrodome. Both teams won Sunday, leaving Minnesota up by a half-game. The White Sox had to beat Detroit in a rain-delayed makeup game Monday to force Tuesday night's tiebreaker.

"We bounce back every time we are against the wall," Guillen said.

Their styles are different. The White Sox relied more on power, the Twins on speed. But going into the game they not only were 88-74, they had identical marks at home (53-28), on the road (35-46) and in their division (43-29).

"That probably says we should be playing this game," Minnesota manager Ron Gardenhire said before the game.

The Twins withstood the departures of ace Johan Santana and Gold Glove center fielder Torii Hunter by utilizing the speed of youngsters such as Denard Span and Carlos Gomez, sound fundamentals that are taught throughout their system and clutch hitting.

Joe Mauer went 0-for-3 Tuesday night but still won his second AL batting title at .328. Justin Morneau, who drove in 129 runs, slumped in the final week.

The White Sox overcame late injuries to surprising star Carlos Quentin, who was leading the AL in homers when he broke his right wrist by hitting it on his bat in frustration Sept. 1, and third baseman Joe Crede, who had back problems. Neither is expected to return for the playoffs.

Cliff Lee, Brad Lidge win comeback player awards

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Brad Lidge has a shot to cap his perfect season with a World Series ring. Cliff Lee should be ready to clear room in the trophy case for a Cy Young Award. First, the two pitchers received a different honor Tuesday when they were selected Comeback Players of the Year.

Lee was 22-3 with an American League-leading 2.54 ERA for the Cleveland Indians and could be their second consecutive Cy Young winner. He went 5-8 with a 6.29 ERA last year and was demoted to the minor leagues.

Lidge was a perfect 41-for-41 in save opportunities as the NL East champion Philadelphia Phillies' closer. In 2007, he converted just 19 of 27 for the Houston Astros and lost his spot as an elite closer.

"I never lost confidence in myself, no matter what the years were like or the results," Lidge said. "I always felt I was going to come back and pitch to the best of my ability."

Lidge hopes he can remain perfect in the playoffs, starting Wednesday when the Phillies open the best-of-five division series at home against Milwaukee.

"If we weren't in the playoffs, this season would not be a success for me," Lidge said before the Phillies worked out.

AP

These are 2008 file photos showing Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Brad Lidge, left, and Cleveland Indians pitcher Cliff Lee, right.

The 31-year-old Lidge reclaimed his reputation as one of the most reliable relievers in the game. After two up-and-down seasons in Houston—following Albert Pujols' mammoth homer off him in the 2005 playoffs—Lidge responded with the best year of his seven-year career. He was on the mound Saturday when the Phillies clinched their second straight division title and there's no one else manager Charlie Manuel wants on the mound with the game on the line.

"Where could we go get anybody better? He's been that good," Manuel said.

Lee, an 18-game winner in 2005, was nearly as flawless this season for the Indians. No one knew what to expect from Lee after he won a three-way competition for the final starting spot during spring training.

He was hurt last season, demoted to the minors and relegated to a relief role when he returned. Lee was even left off the Indians' postseason roster.

Now, Lee is the favorite to follow ex-Indians teammate CC Sabathia for the AL Cy Young Award.

"I've never seen a season like that," Cleveland manager Eric Wedge said. "From start to finish he was incredible. There were real reasons for it. He worked hard physically to get back."

Lee was Cleveland's first 20-game winner since Gaylord Perry in 1974. He joined Perry along with Hall of Famers Bob Feller, Bob Lemon, Early Wynn and 20 others who have worn a Cleveland uniform in the 20-win club.

"I'm sure he's going to be busy this winter," Wedge said.

Lidge's 2007 season wasn't nearly as awful as Lee's. While he did lose his closer's role and missed a month with an injury, Lidge still went 5-3 with a 3.36 ERA and averaged 11.8 strikeouts per nine innings.

"It's kind of a little weird for me," Lidge said. "I was tremendously honored. But I had a (3.36) ERA last year. I didn't think my year was that bad."

Lidge worked hard to return to form once his career started to unravel in the 2005 postseason. His fall as an elite closer in Houston was often blamed on Pujols' stunning shot during the NL championship series. Pujols crushed a three-run homer off Lidge with two outs in the ninth inning to send St. Louis to a 5-4 win in Game 5 that put Houston's pennant plans on hold.

The Astros clinched the series in Game 6 behind Roy Oswalt, but Lidge lost two games in the World Series to the Chicago White Sox.

"It was never quite as dramatic as it was made out to be," Lidge said. "I don't have anything to prove at all. I've pitched in a lot of games. I've had far more good games than bad games in the postseason. I know that some people may not remember that, for whatever reason."

Lidge allowed only one earned run and saved three games in the 2004 and '05 division series and the 2004 NLCS. He needs to be that sharp this October for the Phillies to beat the Brewers, get out of the NLCS and advance to their first World Series since 1993.

"Of course, I'd like to get back and win the World Series and have that be the last image in my mind for the postseason," he said.

Raiders fire Kiffin, name Cable as interim coach

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP)—The Oakland Raiders fired Lane Kiffin on Tuesday just four games into his second season, ending a public feud with owner Al Davis that had been simmering since the start of the year.

The Raiders promoted offensive line coach Tom Cable to interim head coach.

Kiffin had a 5-15 record since being hired last year, losing his final game 28-18 on Sunday to San Diego.

The decision to remove Kiffin was as much about his frequent criticisms of Davis' franchise as it was the team's performance on the field. Those critiques reached a peak when Kiffin distanced himself from the defense after a blowout loss in the season opener, saying that was under coordinator Rob Ryan and Davis' control.

However, during a news conference Tuesday, Davis also critiqued several of Kiffin's coaching and personnel decisions. Among other things, he said Kiffin objected to the Raiders using the first pick in the 2007 draft on quarterback JaMarcus Russell.

The Raiders said Kiffin was fired for cause, meaning they will likely try not to pay him for the remainder of his contract. He signed a two-year deal worth about $4 million with a team option for 2009 when he took over last year. Kiffin's agent Gary Uberstine had no immediate comment.

The firing, first reported by ESPN and NFL.com, comes a day after the St. Louis Rams let go of Scott Linehan, marking the second firing at the quarter point of the season. The last time a coach had been fired this early in the season was when Davis got rid of Mike Shanahan after four games in 1989.

The Raiders did not immediately announce a replacement for Kiffin, but there are plenty of candidates on staff, including Ryan and receivers coach James Lofton, who both interviewed for the job when Kiffin got it in 2007. Offensive coordinator Greg Knapp, running backs coach Tom Rathman, offensive line coach Tom Cable and advance scout Paul Hackett also could be possible choices.

Kiffin's job security was in question as far back as January, when a dispute with Davis over whether he could replace Ryan as defensive coordinator led to the owner sending his coach a letter of resignation to sign.

Kiffin refused to sign it and the feud went on throughout the offseason as Kiffin questioned big-money signings and other personnel moves made by Davis.

The situation grew more heated with Kiffin's comments on Davis' involvement with the defense two days after a season-opening 41-14 loss at home to Denver. Three days after that, reports surfaced that Davis was ready to fire his coach at any time and it dragged out from there.

Kiffin did his best to deflect the controversy and never went to Davis to lobby for his job or a resolution. The team played much better the past three weeks, beating Kansas City and taking leads into the fourth quarter against Buffalo and San Diego before losing.

Davis' once-proud franchise has fallen on hard times of late, with the blame going beyond one coach. Oakland has an NFL-worst 20-64 record since the start of the 2003 season, a stretch spanning the tenures of Bill Callahan, Norv Turner, Art Shell and Kiffin.

Oakland has lost at least 11 games for five straight seasons, tying the dismal Tampa Bay Buccaneers of the 1980 for the worst stretch in NFL history.

Since returning to Oakland in 1995, the Raiders have had just three winning seasons and will be on their eighth head coach. The success mostly came under Jon Gruden, who led Oakland to division titles in 2000 and '01 before leaving for Tampa Bay. Callahan took the Raiders to the Super Bowl the following season, but there was nothing to cheer about in that 48-21 loss to Gruden and the Bucs—and nothing since.

The one constant during that period has been Davis, who won three Super Bowl titles in his first 21 years with the Raiders but has had little success over the past quarter-century.

Kiffin, the son of longtime NFL defensive coordinator Monte Kiffin, was just a 31-year-old assistant at Southern California when Davis hired him to replace Shell following the 2007 season. With that, he became the youngest head coach in the NFL's modern era.

Davis said at the time that Kiffin's youth was not an issue, pointing to the success the Raiders had in the past with young coaches like John Madden and Gruden.

Kiffin, instead, is following the path of Shanahan, who was hired at age 35 in 1988 and then fired four games into his second season. Until this move, Shanahan had been the only coach Davis had fired in the middle of a season since joining the Raiders in 1963.

Shanahan went on to win two Super Bowls with Denver.

AP

Oakland Raiders new interim head coach Tom Cable, left, and owner Al Davis, right, smile during a news conference at Raiders headquarters in Alameda, Calif., Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008.

McGrady says shoulder arthritic, knee slow to heal

HOUSTON (AP)—The Houston Rockets, buzzing about the arrival of Ron Artest, already have injury concerns with Tracy McGrady.

Houston's leading scorer said Monday that his left shoulder is arthritic and will require surgery after this season. He also said his left knee is healing slower than expected from surgery in the spring.

McGrady sprained his shoulder against Sacramento on March 24, and wore padding to protect it for the rest of the season. He had surgery in May to clear loose tissue in his shoulder and knee. He said his knee is "probably 75-80 percent" healthy and will take another two months to fully heal.

McGrady said an MRI revealed the arthritis in his shoulder.

"That's something I've got to deal with again this season," said McGrady, who averaged 21.6 points last season and was selected third-team all-NBA. "My knee should be ready to go by opening night."

McGrady said the shoulder injury was not going to keep him out of practices or games, but added that, "it's going to bother me."

On Tuesday, the Rockets hold their first practice with Artest after picking him up in an August trade with Sacramento. Houston went 55-27 last season, but lost in the first round of the playoffs for the sixth straight year.

Artest adds versatility on both ends—a lockdown defender who can match up with guards or forwards and a multidimensional scorer who should take some of the offensive burden off McGrady and Yao Ming.

Artest averaged 20.5 points, 5.8 rebounds and 3.5 assists last season, but he's still known as much for his unpredictable behavior as his basketball skills. He'll never shed the notoriety as the central figure in the November 2004 brawl with fans at The Palace of Auburn Hills and he feuded with Kings management this summer before the Rockets acquired him.

The 28-year-old Artest said Monday that he's matured, on and off the court, and will keep his emotions in check because of the golden opportunity in front of him.

"I'm grateful to be on a team that has a chance to win," he said. "It adds extra motivation, extra 'go-get-it.' I kind of thrive under those situations. I like when I have something to play for. This year, I really do have something to play for."

One of the main attractions in coming to Houston was reuniting with Rick Adelman, who coached Artest for one season in Sacramento. Artest said he's never known a player who didn't get along with Adelman or like his free-flowing offensive system.

Adelman wants to see Artest and McGrady play together, giving the Rockets scoring threats on the wings.

"He gives us a guy, similar to Tracy, in that he can post up smaller people, he can take people off the dribble," Adelman said. "Tracy is a great passer, Ron will be a good passer. That's going to be our main challenge, working those two guys together, and see where they fit with Yao on the floor, too."

McGrady had to handle more of the offensive load when Yao broke his left foot in late February. He's averaged more than 21 points for the last eight seasons, but is 0-7 in playoff series.

In Artest, he may have finally found the perfect offensive complement.

"I know I get criticized a lot for not leading my team out of the playoffs," McGrady said. "It's hard when you don't have those pieces that you need to elevate you to that next level. Now, I have that and we'll see what happens."

Artest can also step into the role Shane Battier played for the Rockets last season, defending the opposing team's top scorer. Artest said he was asked to score more for the Kings last season and that coach Reggie Theus told him to ease up on defense to conserve energy.

"I think I can play a little harder on defense now," he said. "I always wanted to guard the best player. Coach wouldn't let me guard the best player all the time, because I had to score also. This year, I can go all-out on defense. I haven't had that joy in a couple of years."

Artest said he will happily accept whatever role Adelman gives him. He added that the enthusiasm since the trade hasn't worn off.

"This team right here, this team can be unbelievable," he said. "It's been an all-time high and it's kind of stayed there. I'm still excited. I prepared this summer and that's given me enough confidence, knowing I've prepared to have a great season."

Haslett restores Bulger to Rams starting QB job

ST. LOUIS (AP)—St. Louis Rams quarterback Marc Bulger ducked the media last week, afraid of what he might say after getting benched by Scott Linehan.

Bulger got his job back Tuesday, the biggest development of new coach Jim Haslett's first full day in charge of the winless team. The highest-paid player in franchise history, who ran the scout team offense last week, also broke his silence.

But he exercised care, declining several opportunities to torch his former coach. Linehan was fired on Monday after four straight lopsided losses to start the season and was 11-25 overall in two-plus seasons.

Bulger wouldn't say whether he approved of the change and chuckled before replying, "I'm smarter than that one."

He added, "It wasn't a happy day by any stretch of the imagination."

Backup Trent Green started Sunday's 31-14 loss to the Buffalo Bills in Linehan's final game as coach. Bulger was back with the starters in practice Tuesday, and Haslett said he'll be the starter the rest of the season.

The Rams have a bye week before playing at Washington on Oct. 12.

"I talked to Marc and Trent about it and it's more a gut feeling on my part," Haslett said. "I thought Marc would give us the best opportunity to win games the next three months."

Haslett added that Bulger knew what was expected. The two-time Pro Bowler has completed 58 percent of his passes with two touchdowns and two interceptions.

"Obviously, Scott was accountable and now it's the players' turn to step up," Haslett said. "Marc understands that and he understands I have full confidence he's going to go out there and do the job."

Bulger, who's in the second year of a six-year, $65 million contract, denied a report in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* last week that he no longer wanted to play for Linehan. He said addressing that issue and the benching during the buildup to Sunday's game might have distracted the Rams (0-4).

The quarterback said he made sure Linehan knew it, telling the coach in his office and showing him a good attitude in practice.

"That's not who I am, and I think Coach Linehan knew that I'd be ready," Bulger said. "I told him, 'First quarter, halftime, third quarter.' I practiced hard, I took all the reps on the scout team, and that wasn't going to ever be an issue."

Bulger was appreciative that running back Steven Jackson came to his defense, criticizing Linehan's move on his weekly radio show.

"He's a good friend. You guys have friends and you're going to stand up for people," Bulger told reporters. "I'm glad he stood up for me, but at the same time I'm sure he didn't want all the attention that came from it."

JV Eagles seek 8-0 record vs SCS

Grace Christian will aim for its eighth win in as many games in the junior varsity division when it faces Saipan Community in today's resumption of action in the 2008 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Volleyball League.

Game time is set at 3:30pm at the GCA court.

The JV Eagles remained undefeated as swept their first round assignment via a straight set win over defending champion Seventh Day Adventist last Tuesday.

Also playing in today's start of the second round in the eight-team field middle school division are Saipan International Blue and Calvary Christian. SDA will also meet Whispering Palms at its home court.

Defending champion SDA sports a 5-2 record—good for third, while the WPS Terns are in second place with 5-1.

The Terns just came off a hard-earned win over SCS, also last Tuesday.

The other match-up in the junior varsity divisions will feature Mt. Carmel vs. SIS Green at the former's home court.

In the high school division, the Eagles are also hoping to keep their winning streak intact.

The Eagles carry a 6-0 mark going in today's game against Marianas Baptist Academy.

SIS Blue will host CCA, while MCS will square off with SIS Green at home.

GCA middle and high school coach Mark Robles hopes his players would not be overconfident despite going undefeated in the first round.

"We have to be consistent in our game. We still need to go to practice," Robles said. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

JERICHO

From Page 28

ment with 30 markers.

In three games, Cruz went 27-for-57 from the field for a decent 47.4 percent field goal shooting clip. He shot 11-for-19 from the 15-foot line for a 57.9 percent clip and was 4-for-13 from the 3-point area.

Cruz collected 21 rebounds, seven steals and two blocks in three games, and despite anchoring the Junior Nationals' attack, he still had time dishing off to his teammates, recording a total of 18 assists. Cruz averaged six assists and seven rebounds per game.

Aside from Cruz, also showing consistency on offense for the CNMI were Marvin Rabauliman, Jayvan Tarkong, and Guam-based Bill Babauta.

Rabauliman earned 42 points in three games for an average of 14 points per game. He also averaged 7.7 rebounds and 2.3 assists per match.

Tarkong, who had only six markers on his debut against Guam, redeemed himself in the last two games, scoring 18 and 16 markers, against PNG and New Caledonia, respectively. He had an average of 13.3 points after collecting 40 markers in three games.

Babauta averaged 10 points per match and 4.3 rebounds.

Other notable scorers in the tournament were Guam's Albert Andrea, New Caledonia's Alexander Ha Ho and Francois Dabin, and Australia's Anthony Drmic and Hugh Greenwood.

Andre scored a total of 57 points for an average of 19 points per game, while Dabin averaged 18.6 per match after nailing 56 points in three games. Dabin's teammate Ho averaged 16. 6 points per match.

Greenwood was the top scorer for Australia after three games, averaging 16.3 points per game. Drmic averaged 15.6 points per match.

In the women's division, Tahiti's Alizee Lefranc led the scoring race with her total of 66 point. She averaged 22 points per match, recording her biggest output in their game against the CNMI after nailing 32 markers. Lefranc slowed down against Australia making only 10, but recovered in their 70-40 win over Fiji, hitting 24 points.

Lefranc was a member of last year's all-star team.

At the end of the tournament this weekend, organizers will select 10 players each from the men's and women's division to make up the FIBA Oceania All-Star squad which will be competing in a tournament in Australia next year.

The CNMI's top scorer in the women's division after three games was Lia Rangamar, who averaged 8.3 point for match. She earned a total of 25 points, while Nicole Lebria and Noelle Calvo had 19 and 17, respectively.

Guam had Derin Santos and Leilani Manalo as its top scorers with 39 points apiece after three games. Ahlil Saitanan had 27, while Jaymeelyn Cruz earned 24.

Rebecca Cole was the main gunner for the Australian Opals, collecting a total of 55 points. Gretel Tippet and Karryn Harrington posted 46 and 30 points, respectively.

Sianna Moutry led New Caledonia's offense with her 40 points in three games, followed by Clarissa Passa's 36 markers.

Meanwhile, the quarterfinal round will begin today.

The following are today's pairings:

Men's: Tahiti vs. CNMI; Fiji vs. New Caledonia; Palau vs. Guam; and Australia vs. PNG.

Women's: Fiji vs. New Caledonia; Tahiti vs. PNG; Australia vs. Palau; and CNMI vs. Guam.

CNMI

From Page 28

the CNMI's 14.

The CNMI played an erratic game, committing 37 turnovers against the Opals' only nine.

The Commonwealth cagebelles' sluggish play resulted in Australia coming up with 27 steals. The CNMI stole the ball from an Aussie ballhandler once.

On offense, Australia was way ahead shooting 61.7 percent from the field after going 66-for-107.

The CNMI bets had a dismal 16.7 percent clip, making only seven of its 42 field goal attempts. The team also had a poor showing from the free-throw line, hitting 1-for-7.

Australia had a 50 percent clip from the 15-foot line, going 4-for-8, and was 4-for-13 from downtown.

The Opals also played more as team, recording 34 assists compared to the CNMI's four.

Capping Australia's dominance over the CNMI was its balanced offense with all nine players scoring in double figures.

Kerry Harrington, Rebecca Allen, and Gretel Tippett fired 20 points apiece, while Rebecca Cole added 17. Allyson Brown had 16, Ashleigh Karaitiana chipped in 13, and Jillian Haughton and Madeleine Garrick contributed 12 each. Georgia Minear finished with 10 points.

Lia Rangamar was the lone double-figure scorer for CNMI with 11, and she drew contributions from only three teammates.

The CNMI cagebelles scored only in the first half making 10 points each in the first and second quarters. Australia despite having the win in the bag shut out the Commonwealth in the next two periods.

With their 0-3 slate, the CNMI bets will be pitted against Pool B top placer and host Guam in the quarterfinals.

Guam had a 3-0 record in Pool B after defeating New Caledonia, 67-57; Papua New Guinea, 77-56; and Palau, 76-58.

Other pairings in the quarterfinals are Fiji vs. New Caledonia; Tahiti vs. PNG; and Australia vs. Palau.

All quarterfinals games will be played today after the tournament took a break yesterday.

New Caledonia, which finished second in Pool B, will face Pool A third placer Fiji at 2pm. At 4pm, Tahiti will collide with PNG, while Pool A top finisher Australia will duel Palau at 6pm.

The CNMI-Guam quarterfinals tiff will be played at 8pm.

Australia 140 – Harrington 20, Tippett 20, Allen 20, Cole 17, Brown 16, Karaitiana 13, Haughton 12, Garrick 12, Minear 10.

CNMI 20 – Rangamar 11, Lebria 4, Mesa 3, Calvo 2.

Scoring by quarters: 44-10, 75-20, 110-20, 140-20.

ENYOPHACE

From Page 28

Hence, Jenni Brown, and Dana McFadden, is now 3-0 following wins in its first two games against Kimoichi last Sept. 23 and Enyophace last Sept. 25.

Due to the forfeiture, Acme Roofing gained 21 points in each set, 21-0, 21-0 and 21-0. Points that a team score in each set has bearings in the modified format.

Despite winning the first two sets, they will still have to play the third set.

Enyophace has the most number of points won after three games with 186, followed by Acme Roofing with 172, while MHS Oakies has 163.

Acme Roofing and Enyophace are tied with the most number of sets won with seven each, Oakies has six, and Karakuchi has five.

Enyophace, bannered by lawyer Bruce Berline, Apple Samson, Ken Tanzawa, Mel Matson, Dan Westfall, Brandon Chargualaf, Shiela Figuerorao, and Toi quickly bounced back with a 21-7, 21-11, and 21-16 victory over Off Twice.

The win was Enyophace's second in three starts, while Off Twice suffered its first defeat in two games.

Karakuchi is the other team with a perfect record, so far, after two assignments.

Comprised of Rob Epley, Marino Pungilung, Kirk Schuler, Carie Schuler, Sujung Lee, Ann Munoz, Macoy Aguda, and Bernie Tarobul, Team Karakuchi overpowered MHS Serves Up!, 21-8, 21-6, 21-16.

MHS Oakies, composed of John Nekaifes, Typhoon Saito, Jordan Marciano, Barry Mality, Charnessa Lizama, Mildred Kintol, and Heartim Williams, also recovered with a two-set victory over MHS 67 Doh-Fins via a 21-15, 21-19, 19-21 count that created a two-way tie between Enyophace and MHS Oakies, who have similar 2-1 records.

TSUNAMI

From Page 28

the Marpi pool.

Last month's frequent power outages made the water level at Marpi pool low and not safe for a tournament.

The Kan Pacific Swimming Pool is a 50-meter pool. Its depth from the starting block when the water level is normal is 5'9", but last month, the water went as low as 5'0."

The water level at other end of the starting block was down to as low as 2'0" from 3'0", while the middle part of the pool, which should be at 7'9", was once down to 7'2".

"We waited for the right and safe time to hold the mutual meet. Now the power is back to normal, the water level is back to normal, too," Tsunami Saipan coach Hiro Kimura said.

Kimura said the final date for the mutual meet was agreed upon by him and SSC coach Michael Blasberg.

Actually, after the cancellation of the meet last month, the tournament was reset to Oct. 11. But it was rescheduled again, as Tsunami Saipan will hold its final session of swimming lessons next Saturday.

Tsunami Saipan in cooperation with the NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross has been hosting a five-session swimming lesson since last month at the south pool of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

The last two sessions will be held this Saturday and on Oct. 11 with Tsunami Saipan and the Red Cross awarding certificates of completion to participants.

The Tsunami Saipan-SSC mutual meet on Oct. 18 is part of the two clubs calendar of events for the 2008-2009 season. Both clubs are hoping to hold the meet every month.

After the mutual meet, SSC will be hosting the Eagle Ray 7K mid November. The Eagle Ray race will start from PauPau Beach to Managaha Island.

SSC and Tsunami Saipan are also set to compete in the MTEC Aquathlon next month and the Guam Swim Federation Island Invitational in the last week of November.

The two clubs will participate in another tournament in Guam in December before taking a short holiday break.

Tsuami Saipan will return to action via the Junior Pan Pacific Championships, which Guam will also be hosting from Jan. 8 to 11.

In February next year, Tsunami Saipan are set to compete in an heptathlon event on Saipan and a short course championships in Guam.

SSC will then host the Saipan International Swim Meet and an ocean swim in March. Also scheduled for March next year was Tsunami Saipan's participation in the Tokyo Junior Sprint and Junior Olympics in Japan.

In May, selected swimmers from Tsunami Saipan and SSC will represent the CNMI to the Arafura Games in Darwin Australia.

Tsunami Saipan and SSC swimmers will also compete in the 2008 FINA World Championships, which Rome, Italy will be hosting from July 19 to 31.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS (FINAL)

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Tampa Bay	97	65	.599	–
y-Boston	95	67	.586	2
New York	89	73	.549	8
Toronto	86	76	.531	11
Baltimore	68	93	.422	28 1/2

Central Division

x-Chicago	89	74	.546	–
Minnesota	88	75	.540	1
Cleveland	81	81	.500	7 1/2
Kansas City	75	87	.463	13 1/2
Detroit	74	88	.457	14 1/2

West Division

x-Los Angeles	100	62	.617	–
Texas	79	83	.488	21
Oakland	75	86	.466	24 1/2
Seattle	61	101	.377	39

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

x-Philadelphia	92	70	.568	–
New York	89	73	.549	3
Florida	84	77	.522	7 1/2
Atlanta	72	90	.444	20
Washington	59	102	.366	32 1/2

Central Division

x-Chicago	97	64	.602	–
y-Milwaukee	90	72	.556	7 1/2
Houston	86	75	.534	11
St. Louis	86	76	.531	11 1/2
Cincinnati	74	88	.457	23 1/2
Pittsburgh	67	95	.414	30 1/2

West Division

x-Los Angeles	84	78	.519	–
Arizona	82	80	.506	2
Colorado	74	88	.457	10
San Francisco	72	90	.444	12
San Diego	63	99	.389	21

Yesterday's Game

Chicago White Sox 1, Minnesota 0

x-clinched division
y-clinched wild card

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament

Men's

Pool A

Australia	3	0
Tahiti	2	1
Fiji	1	2
Palau	0	3

Pool B

Guam	3	0
New Caledonia	2	1
CNMI	1	2
PNG	0	3

Women's

Pool A

Australia	3	0
Tahiti	2	1
Fiji	1	2
CNMI	0	3

Pool B

Guam	3	0
New Caledonia	2	1
PNG	1	2
Palau	0	3

Belau Softball Standings

Men's Division

Brotherhood	9	1
PTI	9	2
Ready Mix	7	2
Man Amigos	5	3
Auel Auel	8	3
Choll Aces	6	4
Sai Pal	5	5
PIC	5	6
Falcons	3	8
Haga "T"	2	9
Ngiwal	1	8
Bombers	1	10

Women's Division

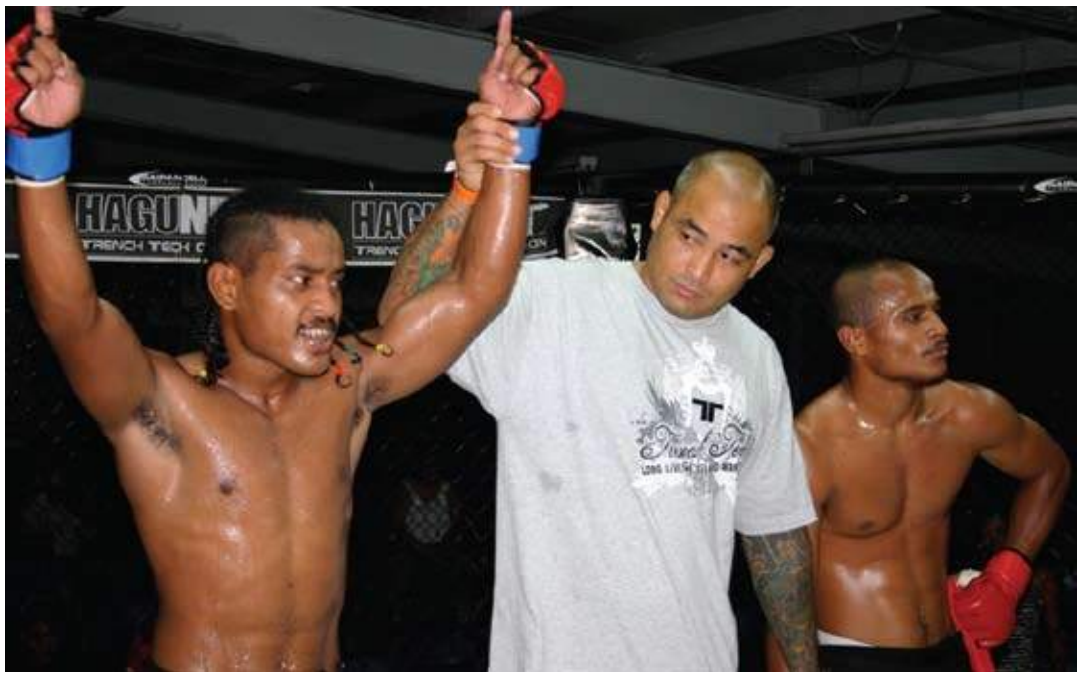
Hitters	8	1
Sakudi	8	1
Ohn Sakau	4	5
Esta Ombe	3	6
Atu'Asi	2	7

Results of games on Sept. 28

Choll Aces 8, Saipal 3
Auel Auel 10, Haga T 0
PTI 14, Man Amigos 6
Brotherhood 10, Ngiwal 0

Rites of Passage V: Raging Warriors

Photos By
NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.



Far left, Guam-based referee Stephen Roberto declares Layug winner via unanimous decision over Rangamar.

Left, ring announcer L.J. Castro raises Andrew Sablan's right hand after he knocked out Martin "Tom Cat" Castro in just 11 seconds of the first round of their match last Saturday in Rites of Passage V: Raging Warriors.

Below, Martin "Tom Cat' Castro is attended by medical staff and his corner men as he fell unconscious after being knocked down by Andrew Sablan in the first round of their match.

Two more fighters like to do their stuff at the mat.

Jordan Ogo, right, sizes up with Filipino fighter Raymond C. De Luna, whom he beat by tap out in the second round.

Referee Stephen Roberto of Guam gives instructions to the fighters for the main event—Chris "No Luv" Layug vs. Derrick "Pinchi" Rangamar.

Ryan "Trouble" Ngirbabul is on top of Salvador Limes whom he beat via referee stoppage in one minute 17 seconds of the first round in their 160-lb. bout.

Chris "No Luv" Layug grapples Derrick "Pinchi" Rangamar in the latter's corner in the first round of their main event fight.

Chris "No Luv" Layug tightens his grip on Derrick "Pinchi" Rangamar's waist in the second round of their match.

The fighter on the left won this bout as he chokes his opponent in the third round.

JV Eagles seek 8-0 record vs SCS
Grace Christian will aim for its eighth win in as many games in the junior varsity division when it faces Saipan Community in today's resumption of action in the 2008 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Volleyball League.
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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Thome, Griffey carry White Sox to AL Central crown
Thanks to Jim Thome's bat and Ken Griffey Jr.'s arm, the AL Central has a winner at last: the Chicago White Sox.

24

Jericho tops scoring in FIBA caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

If scoring will be one of the criteria for the selection of the FIBA Oceania All-Star, the CNMI Junior Nationals' Jericho Cruz will be a shoe-in on the elite squad.

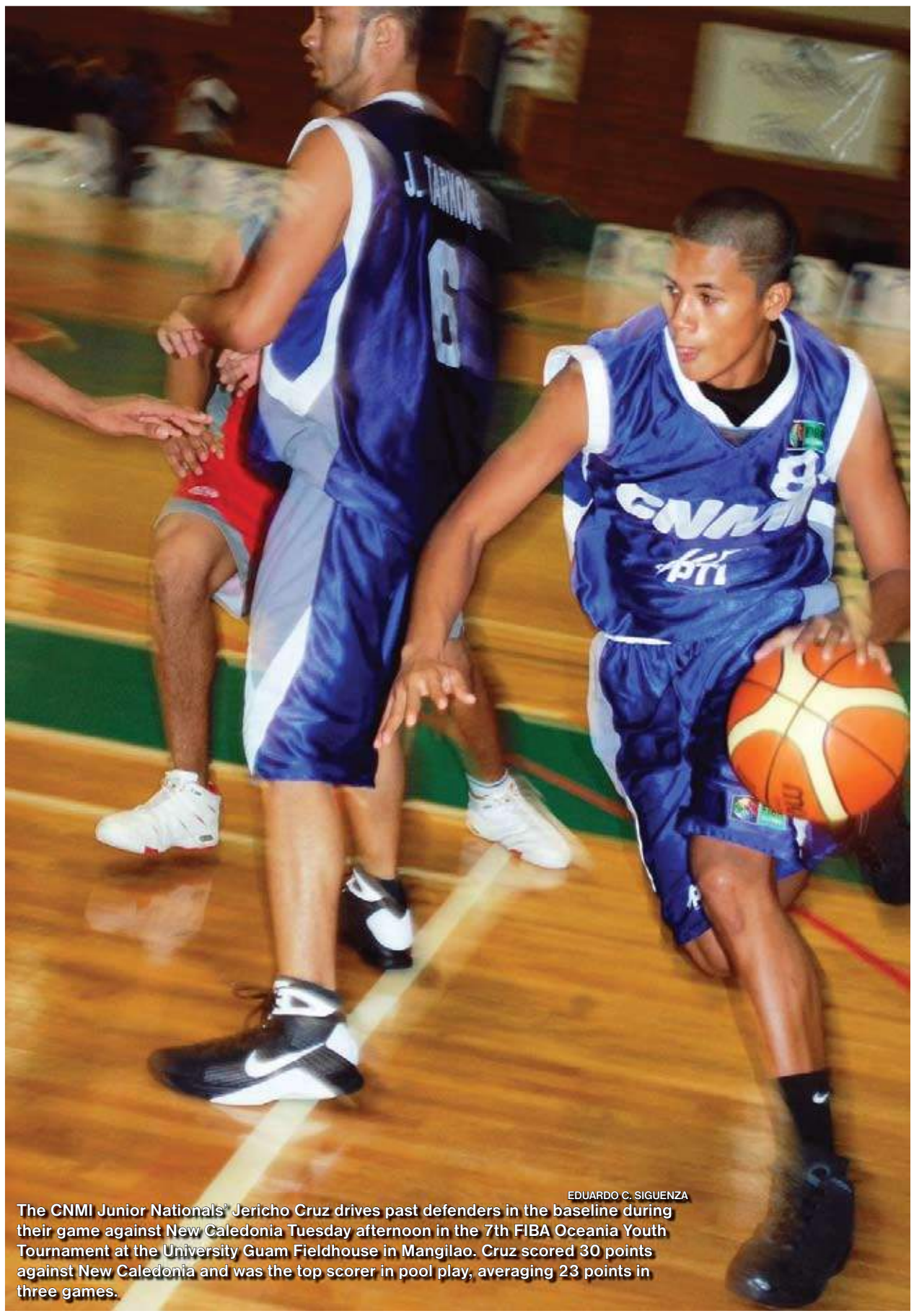
After three games in the pool play, Cruz emerged as the top scorer in the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament, which is being held at the University of Guam Fielhouse in Mangilao.

The CNMI gunner averaged 23 points per game in three matches in Pool A. Cruz had a slow start in the FIBA Oceania caging making only 10 points in the Junior Nationals' 61-102 loss to host Guam Sunday. But Cruz, who had been the Junior Nationals' consistent top scorer in various leagues and tournaments his team had joined in on Saipan, regained his form big time, exploding for 29 points against Papua New Guinea.

The CNMI Junior Nationals won over PNG, 93-84.

In their last game in Pool A, Cruz held his ground against New Caledonia's prolific scorers, recording his highest points so far in the tourna-

See JERICHO on Page 26



EDUARDO C. SIGUENZA
The CNMI Junior Nationals' Jericho Cruz drives past defenders in the baseline during their game against New Caledonia Tuesday afternoon in the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament at the University Guam Fieldhouse in Mangilao. Cruz scored 30 points against New Caledonia and was the top scorer in pool play, averaging 23 points in three games.

CNMI *cagebelles held to lowest output vs Australia*

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

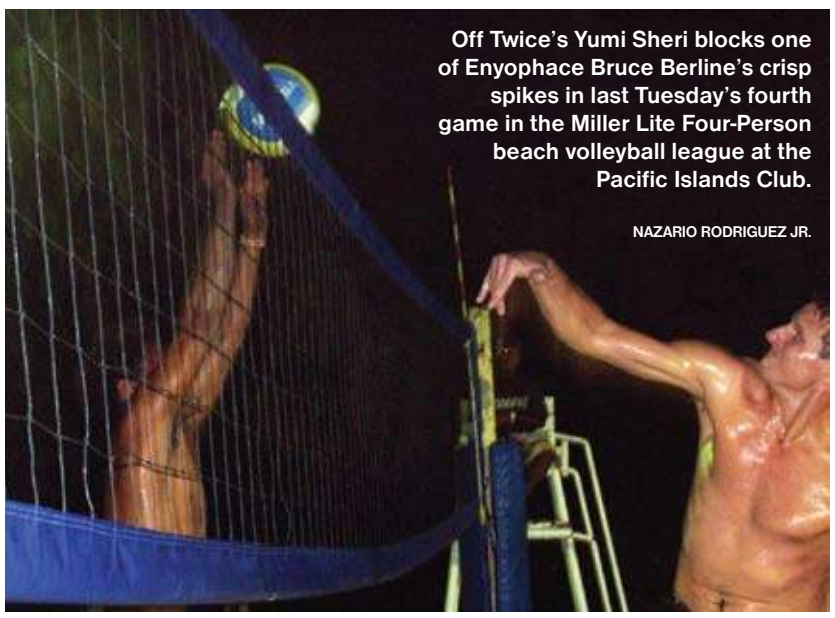
The Australia-CNMI game was a mismatch with the Opals holding the Commonwealth's cagebelles to their lowest output en route to a 140-20 demolition in the last game in Pool A of the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament Tuesday afternoon at the University of Guam Fieldhouse.

The CNMI cagebelles finished last in Pool A with a 0-3 record. It lost to Tahiti in the first match, 101-30 and had a decent game against Fiji before bowing out, 46-69.

Australia's dominance over the young and much smaller CNMI Women's Junior Nationals was evident on both ends of the court.

The towering Opals outrebounded the CNMI cagebelles, 46-20. Australia had 29 offensive rebounds compared to CNMI's six. On the defensive end, Australia tallied 17 against

See CNMI on Page 26



Off Twice's Yumi Sheri blocks one of Enyophace Bruce Berline's crisp spikes in last Tuesday's fourth game in the Miller Lite Four-Person beach volleyball league at the Pacific Islands Club.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Enyophace rips Off Twice, Acme keeps lead

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Acme Roofing won without flexing its muscles while three other teams—Karakuchi, Enyophace, and MHS Oakies—posted victories last Tuesday night in the Miller Lite Four-Person Beach Volleyball League at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Champ-On arrived on time at the PIC court but without a female player thus giving Acme Roofing the outright win.

The two teams used the game as practice session for a while before the rain fell.

Acme Roofing, composed of Larry Shari, Jazz Roscow, Rob Jordan, Luthor Taylor, J.R. Ngeskebei, Elizabeth

See ENYOPHACE on Page 26

Tsunami Saipan, SSC to hold first mutual meet Oct. 18

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan and Saipan Swim Club will test each other's mettle as they duel in a mutual meet set for Oct. 18 at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

The meet, which will be used by both clubs to gauge the development of their swimmers, was originally scheduled for last month, but was moved to a later date due to the low water level at

See TSUNAMI on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan and Saipan Swim Club will have a mutual meet on Oct. 18 at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi. Photo above shows Cooper Graf in action at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in a file photo.